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Mardi
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 9 May 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 9 mai 2023

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Good morning. Let us pray.

Prayers.

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Paul Calandra: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Pursuant to standing order 7(e), I wish to inform the House that tonight's evening meeting is cancelled.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING MORE MINES
ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023 VISANT L'AMÉNAGEMENT
DE DAVANTAGE DE MINES

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 8, 2023, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 71, An Act to amend the Mining Act / Projet de loi 71, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les mines.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Mantha: It's always an honour to stand in this House on behalf of the good people of Algoma-Manitoulin. I'm looking forward to the summer months that we're going to be having. I'm looking forward to engaging with the 37 municipalities across Algoma-Manitoulin.

I'm also an avid dancer. I dance a lot at the community powwows that are going on through my riding. The 22 First Nations that are contained within the area of Algoma-Manitoulin—it's always a joy to go into those communities, sit, feast. We often discuss. We at times cry. We at times talk about difficult times.

That's where my comments are going to go this morning.

I have a question for this government. I will start with the question, and I will end with the question: What is this government's definition and process of free and informed prior consent? What does that mean, and what does that look like for this government?

I want to focus my comments today on the growing calls of First Nations and Indigenous people across this province against this legislation and the unilateral decision-making by Ontario in developing mine projects.

Imposing the Ring of Fire or any mining project on a First Nation within their territory does not work. Going down that road is what the previous government tried to do to develop the Ring of Fire, and it failed miserably. Keeping on the same path will also fail this government. You'd think it would have learned the lesson by looking at how the Liberals failed in doing so.

In fact, since this legislation was introduced, there has been nothing but opposition from First Nations across northern Ontario. That shouldn't have been a surprise to anyone who was watching or listening to the nations in this area. Back in October of last year, the Missanabie Cree, Chapleau Cree First Nation and Brunswick House First Nation began pursuing legal action against Ontario for its approach to authorizing industrial development on their territory.

Going back further, in December 2020, Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg wrote to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs about mining claims being staked on their traditional territory without their consent or being priorly informed.

On the same issue, the United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising passed a resolution calling on the government to pause electronic staking of mineral claims and work with them to ensure the system upholds their treaty rights.

Just recently, the Matawa Chiefs Council and Atikameksheng Anishnawbek have come out in opposition of Bill 71 and the changes it makes to the Mining Act.

Since this bill was tabled, 10 Treaty 9 First Nations have filed a lawsuit against Ontario for failing to uphold the terms outlined in the treaty that they were signatories to as well.

Engaging with and listening, often, is something that I'm told that I do, when I sit with First Nations' leadership is—you listen, you sit, you absorb, you try to understand the historical significance of what they're bringing forward.

Chief Shining Turtle from Whitefish River First Nation was one of those leaders. The Ogimaa often sat me down and explained to me the frustration, because their questions to this government have gone on for several years with no answer. A letter that he sent to the government said, "Still waiting for the honour of the crown."

"As a First Nation, we hear a lot about the honour of the crown" but remain unchanged. "Yes, we hear a lot about the honour of the crown ... but we never see practical examples of such honour and respect for the First Nations."

I touched a little bit on the resolution that the United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising put forward. In

their resolution file, it said, “Mining claims, activities and projects infringing on First Nation rights and access to resources.” This was back from July 25, 2022.

“The UCCMM First Nations has a deep spiritual connection with Mother Earth and her gifts. The Creator gave the Anishinaabe the stewardship role in looking after Mother Earth and her gifts. The UCCMM First Nations never relinquished, gave up, surrendered or yield title, ownership or stewardship to the natural resources ‘the gifts from Mother Earth,’ including land. The UCCMM First Nations assert jurisdiction over the lands, waters, resources and their citizens.”

Another heading: “3 Northern First Nations Take Ontario to Court Over Environmental Protection, Treaty Rights.”

“Missanabie Cree Nation, Chapleau Cree First Nation and Brunswick House First Nation are pursuing legal action against the Ontario government ... and allege it has failed to uphold treaty obligations.”

Another heading: “Atikameksheng Anishnawbek Issues a Formal Response to Ontario’s Government’s Proposed Bill 71, Building More Mines Act.”

“We do not support Bill 71....”

Another heading: “‘We Never Surrendered Our Rights’: Treaty 9 Nations Launching \$95B Claim Lawsuit Against Canada, Ontario.”

The point that I’m making here is that free, informed and prior consent is not just a piece of paper or an afterthought that you send for an opinion to First Nations about changes this government is doing. Whether it’s related or not, there are definitely impacts that happen to that relationship that they have with this government, and this government is ignoring that role, that responsibility they have.

I started with a question, and I’m going to put the question to this government again: What is your definition of free, informed and prior consent?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is now time for questions.

0910

Mr. Will Bouma: It’s good to engage with my brother in the House. I completely agree, and I think the Minister of Mines would agree also, how important it is that we do proper Indigenous consultation—I don’t have that exact definition here in front of me.

I was wondering if the member could comment for a moment on how important it is that we share the wealth of the land with Indigenous peoples and how important it is that we work together for the long-term prosperity—not just for Ontario; indeed, for the entire world—with the resource extraction that we can do up north and what that could potentially do for the Indigenous territories in his riding.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I want to thank the member for the question.

Development in First Nations territory—all of them are not opposed to development. They want to see prosperous opportunities for their community members, as well.

However, there is a process to engage with First Nations and their leadership. It takes time. It takes trust. It takes a respectful relationship that must be built. When you try to move legislation and you send that legislation as, “Hey, we’re doing this,” you’re really being disrespectful to that process, toward the leadership of First Nations communities, because there is an extensive engagement process that they have to follow through as well with their elders, with their community members, with their knowledge keepers, with their medicine people.

These discussions cannot happen as an afterthought. It must happen before the legislation and even while the legislation is being developed. That’s what informed negotiations, discussions look like, and it develops a real, respectful relationship with First Nations.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Thank you for your talk.

I know that with the current approach, where you only talk to certain First Nations, not all First Nations—do you think the Ring of Fire will proceed with the divide-and-conquer approach?

Mr. Michael Mantha: I want to thank the member, who is very knowledgeable about this process, and I highly respect his views. He speaks from experience.

I don’t see it moving forward. We’ve seen it from the previous government—doing the divide and conquer because they couldn’t move some of their priorities forward. We’re seeing it with this government as well. It really sets communities back. It really puts them on the defensive.

I just highlighted many of those court cases that are now going forward and the lawsuits that have been launched against both Canadian and Ontario governments. This should be a red flag for this government. This should be a sign to tell them, “We need to take a step back. We are not properly engaging. We are not doing the processes. And we are not respecting the requests from First Nations communities to have meaningful consultation.”

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Will Bouma: Again, I really appreciate the importance of proper consultation through this.

It has been interesting listening to debate. I haven’t heard a lot of negatives from the opposition—other than the need for good consultation. I know we have a strong commitment from our minister in order to make sure that happens, and I understand those concerns completely.

When this came, we saw the opposition supporting this on a voice vote on second reading. Of course, it went to a full vote. I believe this legislation will be coming up for a vote, if not today, in the next couple of days.

I was wondering if I could ask the member from Algoma-Manitoulin, knowing the importance of the benefits that this can have for Indigenous peoples across the province of Ontario, if he will be voting in favour of the legislation when it comes for a vote.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I think what’s going to be important is to provide the opportunity for First Nations

leadership to provide their comments—which the government has not taken the opportunity, as far as consultation with this process. Although this government stands in the House and responds to many of the questions that are coming from the independent members and the opposition that there is nothing in this legislation that is going to be impacting the inherent rights of people within the First Nations communities—but it absolutely does, and that's the issue at hand here. The government had a process for having respectful conversation and—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is now time for further debate.

Mr. Rob Flack: I'm pleased to rise in this Legislature today in support of the Building More Mines Act, Bill 71. The Minister of Mines and his parliamentary assistant have done, in my opinion, an outstanding job driving this much-needed legislation forward.

Ontario's mineral exploration and mining sector generates almost \$13 billion in annual GDP—no small number—and significant opportunities for this province, especially for northern and Indigenous communities. Our mining sector has world-class environmental, health and safety and Indigenous consultation standards, and they are being followed.

Our government's mining mandate includes executing the Critical Minerals Strategy, developing the Ring of Fire and making Ontario the best jurisdiction for mining. These objectives will help us build an integrated supply chain from critical minerals production in the north to battery and EV manufacturing in the south—and it's that that I want to speak a little bit about this morning.

Speaker, with the recent Volkswagen announcement to invest in Ontario, and specifically St. Thomas and Elgin county, it is absolutely crucial that our critical minerals located in northern Ontario are part of the future electric vehicle battery production in Ontario. This downstream integration complements both Stellantis and Volkswagen's production facilities in southwestern Ontario. This is Canada's proven region of automobile manufacturing excellence, with decades of notable achievements. Instead of exporting our critical minerals abroad, Ontario will be adding value to these natural resources while creating new, better and sustainable jobs for all Ontarians. Indigenous communities, skilled trade workers and new Canadians will have the opportunity to be pioneers in the EV revolution sweeping the entire world. Greener energy and renewable energy—yes, these critical minerals are renewable, recyclable and were key factors in Volkswagen's consideration before choosing Ontario for their mega manufacturing facility.

From Ontario's north to Ontario's southwest, this government is boldly building new frontiers to develop our province's economy. This is why we need to develop future mining industry opportunities. And the Building More Mines Act is doing just that. It cannot take 15 years to permit a mine if we're going to accomplish our government's objectives in the mining sector and, indeed, our economy. Unclear processes, inflexible, burdensome requirements and ambiguous discretionary decision-making processes have been and are holding us back. This will

change with this bill. This has resulted in project delays and cost overruns, costing Ontario massive opportunities—and competition from other provinces in this country. The economic impacts of the mining industry are immense, and we cannot afford to lose this vast source of revenue that can help us fund much-needed provincial services throughout Ontario. We must take action now to address these challenges and attract more strategic investments in this province.

Speaker, ever since I moved to southwestern Ontario, a long time ago, in 1986—even the member from Sarnia would remember those days—I've witnessed year after year, decade after decade, the loss of key jobs in the automotive sector. It was truly painful to witness and experience. As time marched on, it was widely considered that our best days were behind us with regard to building automobiles and the components that make them up. Head offices left London. Key companies like Ford closed and abandoned the St. Thomas and Elgin county site. Good people and good families lost their livelihoods. We became a high-cost province that simply lost its competitive edge on the North American stage.

It was said by previous Liberal governments that the time had come in Ontario to focus on the service sector, not the manufacturing sector, because we could not compete—or, plainly spoken, we would not be able to employ key workers at the wages they'd learned to live with and had earned honestly. When a pall of negativity shrouds the thinking of entrepreneurs and investors in our communities, little investment will occur. Nobody will invest in a climate of negativity. With negativity, capital expansion is curtailed and people get laid off. It was a painful few decades as the erosion of investment, jobs and productivity left London and surrounding communities.

0920

Speaker, part of the reason I chose to seek a seat in this Legislature was to make a difference by using the skills I had developed in a career of business and commerce.

Leadership, experience and common sense matter, and, in a very small way, I am thrilled to have been part of the historic announcement by Volkswagen to locate in my riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London. Our government and collective stakeholders decided negativity could no longer win. Together, we took a bias for action, and, with a sense of urgency, we faced adversity head-on; we changed the playing field to the environment of “can do” and “we shall prevail.” This historic investment will have a generational impact in Elgin–Middlesex–London and, indeed, southwestern Ontario. The same generational impact was created when the Ford Motor Co. moved to Talbotville in 1967.

However, to attract key companies like Volkswagen and others, Ontario needed to create and has created an environment for business to invest and workers to earn great wages. Part of the environment of success we needed to create was cost reduction. Company after company told this province again and again, “If you want us here, lower the cost of doing business.” Premier Ford and this government listened, and to date, since 2018, we have eliminated

\$8 billion of waste and bureaucratic red tape, paving the way for innovation and success.

As Ontario competed against 90 jurisdictions globally and 40 US states for the Volkswagen investment, Premier Ford and Minister Fedeli sharpened their pencils and went to work. With tremendous collaborations from the municipalities of St. Thomas, Elgin county and London, along with the federal government, thankfully, we won the day. Key factors in Volkswagen's decision were access to proven labour, skilled trades and clean energy. But first and foremost, we needed a cost-competitive playing field, which was our ante into the global competition.

Another factor, if not the deciding factor, in the Volkswagen announcement was Ontario's abundant natural resource of critical minerals in northern Ontario. The magic and the wonder of this deal really begins in northern Ontario. Having the critical resources and being able to mine them competitively and transport them to southwestern Ontario is really the mortar that helped cement the Volkswagen deal.

Working with all stakeholders, including First Nations communities, mining companies and the Ontario Mining Association, has been fruitful.

As part of the Legislature's Standing Committee on the Interior, I was happy to attend our recent trip to the north to listen and learn from recent submissions.

Bill 71, once again, helps create the environment for downstream integration to occur. Turning critical minerals into added-value EV battery components makes my heart sing. It is exactly what this country has dreamed of since Confederation. No longer are we just a nation gifted with only natural resources; we are a nation and a province that can once again compete globally in the automotive manufacturing sector.

It's not an easy task to find veins of minerals that will be applicable to our long-term vision of EV production in Ontario. For example, the Ontario Mining Association stated:

"Although the addition of even one mine can bring substantial benefits to society, the wins do not come quickly or easily. It takes a great deal of will, effort and time to discover a viable ore deposit and bring it into production.

"There is no way of predicting where profitable ore deposits will be found. Each prospector and investor may fervently hope for the next 'big find', but only one in 10 mineral exploration projects are taken to the drill stage, and one in 1,000 drill programs unearth viable mineral deposits; ultimately, less than one in 10,000 projects become mines."

It's a daunting task indeed.

Instead of exporting our natural resources, we are transforming them into jobs for the people of Ontario—once again, good-paying, sustainable jobs with benefits, pensions and security.

The changes this bill will help bring about include improving closure planning, which will provide companies with more operational flexibility, allow site development to happen much faster, rely on the certifications of qualified professionals as technical experts, phase financial

assurance to save companies money, and reduce the amounts of amendments—important.

The changes to this Mining Act will also improve decision-making by reducing discretionary decisions and ambiguity, provide more opportunities for political oversight for projects that are a priority for the government, clarify the decision-making process for mining companies, allow for alternative rehabilitation measures and operational flexibility—which I learned a great deal about when we were up north.

The changes will also enhance critical minerals by allowing the recovery of minerals from tailings and mine waste—again, talked about extensively when we were in the north—and promote the redevelopment of legacy mine sites to reduce financial liability for this province.

There is a tremendous urgency for us to permit and build mines more efficiently in this province. This will maximize the effectiveness of our Critical Minerals Strategy and support the end-to-end supply chain from mines to manufacturing. It will also build on the success of Ontario's mining sector and create economic opportunities throughout the province.

Speaker, it must be made abundantly clear: These changes will not compromise our world-class environmental, labour or Indigenous consultation standards. This mining legislation is about improving ministry processes and saving companies time and money.

This can be seen in our government's strong partnerships with the Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation that have led to real results. The two communities are already working on environmental assessments for their community road projects and have submitted the terms of reference for the Northern Road Link environmental assessment to Ontario for review.

Our government is investing \$1 billion in these road projects and other infrastructure needs including broadband and community supports. These three projects would connect the two First Nations to the highway network and to the Ring of Fire. These roads would improve food security, housing conditions and access to health and education services for these communities, as well as unlock the nationally significant critical mineral deposits in the Ring of Fire.

The Ring of Fire has the critical minerals we need for the EV manufacturing revolution to take place in Ontario, and it is taking place. That is why our government, again, is investing \$1 billion to make these road projects a reality.

The Ring of Fire isn't just about mining. It's about infrastructure corridors, it's about energy corridors, it's about broadband and other projects that will bring prosperity to this entire region.

There are 33 minerals in Ontario's critical minerals list including nickel, cobalt and lithium. Ontario produces approximately two fifths of Canada's gold production, one third of Canada's nickel production, one quarter of Canada's copper production and two thirds of Canada's platinum group metals production.

There are currently 36 active mining operations in Ontario, the majority of which are in northern Ontario.

Again, we learned details of this while we were travelling the north. There are more new mine construction projects and mine expansions under way as we speak.

This legislation will, if passed, attract more investment and secure critical minerals that support the made-in-Ontario supply chain for new technologies like batteries and electric vehicles.

I think it has been said throughout this debate, and I agree totally: It should not take 15 years to issue a mining permit. The process to open and close a mine is too time-consuming and costly, leading to project delays, lost opportunities for Ontario mineral exploration and the entire mining sector.

At a time when Ontario is securing game-changing investments in its growing automotive manufacturing sector, these changes would benefit the entire minerals sector and advance Ontario's plan to build an integrated supply chain by connecting mineral producers in the north along with those in the Ring of Fire with the manufacturing sector in the south—again, the north and the south coming together to create wonderful synergies and wonderful opportunities for all Ontario.

Our government knows that the world wants Ontario's critical minerals. We are the first government to pave the way for this exciting sector by investing in exploration and innovation through our Critical Minerals Strategy and cutting unnecessary government red tape so that companies can build more mines. We talked about that earlier—\$8 billion to reduce the cost of business—and that includes opportunities in the north.

The modifications to the Mining Act would increase certainty for business planning and generate investment in northern Ontario to provide significant economic development opportunities for northern and Indigenous communities. We are engaging with industry, Indigenous communities and Indigenous organizations on the proposed changes to the Mining Act and consulting on future regulatory changes. Those discussions are taking place now.

There are no proposed changes to our world-class environmental protections. This is about improving how the Ministry of Mines operates and finding efficiencies. Modernizing the Mining Act is crucial to support our transition to a green economy.

0930

Moving back to southwestern Ontario for a minute: The Volkswagen site in St. Thomas will create 3,000 new jobs once the multiple facilities are up and operating by 2027—fantastic news that I think many of us share in this House. However, an impressive 30,000 tertiary or spinoff jobs will also be created, not only in southwestern Ontario but throughout the entire province, including northern Ontario. This includes thousands of jobs in the mining sector and in the Ring of Fire. I am very pleased that northern Ontario has a seat at the table, enjoying part of the downstream integration and the benefits from this historic EV announcement that was made.

Allow me to share a quote from my esteemed colleague the member for Essex and parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Mines that I believe captures the essence of

how this bill supports Ontario's vision of economic prosperity:

“And that's also what this legislation is about. It's about getting the critical minerals we need to make a greener Ontario. The minerals that we mine in the north are going to stay right here in Ontario. The day of ‘dig it and ship it’ is over. We are not going to ‘dig it and ship it’ anymore!

“We are going to mine these critical minerals right here in Ontario. Then we are going to process them right here in Ontario. And then we are going to build electric batteries right here in Ontario. And then those batteries are going to go into vehicles that we build right here in Ontario.

“It will be a perfect domestic supply chain from start to finish, Speaker. Mine it, process it, and build it right here in Ontario, it will mean more jobs for people in Ontario. Good jobs. Meaningful jobs. Jobs with good pay, and a pension, and benefits.”

Speaker, the member from Essex captures the significance of this bill, I think, wonderfully.

Again, moving back to southwestern Ontario, I want to emphasize that I think it's key, it's paramount that we explore every opportunity to bring cost reduction in how we do business, because without being competitive we don't get to advance. I think the Minister of Mines would agree—in his business career—that if you're not competitive, you don't get a chance to have an ante in the game. It starts there.

I think when we take a look at the opportunity in northern Ontario, with consultations, duty to consult, working with all communities, we're doing that, and I think this leads to one of the most historic announcements and opportunities that this government has ever seen, this province has ever seen, and this country has ever seen. That is why our government, under the leadership of the Minister of Mines as well as the Premier, is proposing changes to this Mining Act.

I want to come back to my years in London and southwestern Ontario. All those years—I think members opposite who live in London and community would agree—we saw a lot of good jobs being gone, and it was sad. It was almost like you felt helpless—“What can we do to prevent this?”

Now, respectfully, we've been bringing industry back. The agri-food sector has been doing a great job, and they will continue to do a great job. This is historic. We're back in the automotive business—and again, I want to come back to, thanks to the north, thanks to that opportunity. It's downstream integration, and it works magically. It's the real Canadian dream, the real Canadian opportunity.

To wrap up, Speaker: Bill 71 sets the stage for transformative, innovative and exciting economic development, not only in Canada, but in Ontario. Canada wins, Ontario wins, and northern Ontario communities win. Finally, and most importantly, the Ontario workers of this great province will win the day.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is time for questions.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London for his comments. I have

a great deal of respect for the member and absolutely agree with many of the member's comments.

Here on the side of the official opposition, we want to see more projects which result in good-paying union jobs with benefits and pensions. The official opposition is also very respectful of the principles of free, prior and informed and consent of all affected First Nations, as well as environmental sustainability.

My concern, however, with this legislation, Bill 71, is section 7(1)—applications with closure plans that don't meet the requirements.

So my question for the member is, what is the point of having standards, what is the point of having rules, what is the point of having requirements if the minister can ignore them and undermine them altogether?

Mr. Rob Flack: Thank you to the member from London North Centre for his question.

We can differ, with a lot of reasons, on this legislation, and obviously that's our job—to debate and have healthy discussion, which I think we've been doing.

I always come back to the reality, and the reality is, this is a game-changer. We're going to create 33,000-plus jobs.

The Minister of Economic Development has been travelling, talking to numerous other companies that are interested in coming to our region to set up shop, and that is going to, again, add to the opportunity.

I can tell you other communities within our ridings are also looking at strategic investments, changing how they can do business, attracting these investments.

I can say my answer is going to consistently be "33,000-plus jobs."

We're going to do it right. The duty to consult—making sure we speed up this process and do it right as we speed it up is the commitment I know the minister has, the parliamentary assistant has and the Premier has. We will continue to communicate, to collaborate, to listen and learn—but again, 33,000 jobs.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Sarnia–Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you to the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London for that dissertation.

I also am long enough in the tooth that I remember the heady days of Talbotville, when Ford first came there. Of course, in Chemical Valley—I come from Sarnia–Lambton—we lost thousands of jobs in the 1980s and 1990s as we transitioned to a different economy.

So I'm very interested in the 30,000 to 33,000 jobs that are going to come back to southwestern Ontario and, of course, the north. I subscribe to the fact that if we want to have—and we deserve—the social benefits that brings, we needed taxation, we need an economy that will support those benefits. Could you elaborate on that, please?

Mr. Rob Flack: Thank you to the member from Sarnia, whom I've known for many years. We've shared these concerns for decades.

From my world, this being my first year in public service—doing a lot of business in southwestern Ontario, I might add—it was pretty easy to hire people in the late 1980s and 1990s and through the beginning of the century,

because there were a lot of unemployed workers. At our feed plants, at our offices, it was easy to find workers. It's not so easy today.

I always maintain that the best social program we can have is a good job—not just a gig job, but a job that has benefits and has a pension. That's what this investment is bringing—not only for southwestern Ontario; it's going to happen in northern Ontario, too.

I would say a rising tide lifts all boats. The rising tide here is strong economic investment, and the boats lifted up are going to be the people working, sailing magnificently throughout this great province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Jeff Burch: I thank the member for his comments.

We've heard from mining companies and Aboriginal communities that the government's approach to free and informed prior consent is not one that is going to work, and that it's going to lead to conflict. The member is justifying their entire approach by the number of jobs—but if their approach is one that leads to conflict, won't that jeopardize the investment itself? If I'm an investor and I see government taking an approach that leads to conflict—that's going to scare away investment. It's not going to draw investment.

Mr. Rob Flack: The process in the duty to consult is going on. The changes to the Mining Act through this bill will not affect that one iota. In fact, in speaking with the minister and the parliamentary assistant, the duty to consult is actually taking place as we speak.

Again, I always use the analogy of the proof is in the pudding. People are investing, people are calling, people are knocking on doors. Throughout this, when everyone was wondering what the investment was going to be in Elgin–Middlesex–London or St. Thomas, specifically, I always said, "Just listen. Wait until the proof is in the pudding." When people invest \$7 billion, and you're going to see a five-year return, and you're going to see 33,000 jobs, and you're going to see economic prosperity, I say that's a pretty good deal—and again, that's not only southwestern Ontario; it's throughout this entire province, including northern Ontario.

0940

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Kevin Holland: The natural resources of northern Ontario have played a key role in the economy of Ontario, and our government recognizes the generational opportunities that exist.

What will this act do for northern and Indigenous communities specifically?

Mr. Rob Flack: I think it does a few things. Number one, it takes advantage of a natural resource that is renewable and recyclable. We can take these critical components and put them into batteries and then again create future batteries after they've been recycled. That's a wonderful opportunity for northern Ontario.

It's going to create jobs. Again, I'm assuming the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan likes the idea of a

lot of jobs in his riding and in his community, having been the mayor for, I think, 30 or 40 years, or 50 or 60 years—whatever it was, it was a long time that he was mayor of Thunder Bay. Economic prosperity is key to northern Ontario. I know that's why he ran. That's why I ran. And that's why we're proud of this historic announcement. It's generational in nature, and that generational change and economic prosperity will benefit people in his riding and throughout northern Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Chris Glover: I appreciate the comments from the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London today.

I've lived and worked in northern Ontario, and I worked very briefly in the mining sector up there, so I really appreciate the contribution that mining makes to Ontario's economy.

One of the concerns with this legislation, though, is that in section 7(1), as my colleague was just pointing out, it says that the cleanup—so when a mine is going to open, it's going to run for 15 to 20 years on average, and then there's the cleanup that has to happen. They have to have a fund for that cleanup. But this government's legislation allows the minister to exempt the company from having an adequate cleanup plan. What this means is that the cost of the cleanup will be downloaded onto taxpayers. Is that a fair burden for future taxpayers—to pay for the cleanup of these mines?

Mr. Rob Flack: To the member opposite: I respectfully disagree. I think the provisions in this act in terms of remediation are clear and precise. I'm in complete disagreement. I take an opposite approach. I think it enhances our ability to move forward.

Let me point out that two million vehicles have been taken off the road with the environmental actions of this province. It is a green economy. We are working hard. We are working strong. This is going to enhance that, and the changes within the provisions of this act, including remediation, enhance that.

I don't think it's going to stall any investment. It's not going to put any tax burden on any Canadian. In fact, it will lower taxes. It will lower the burden. It will create income. It will put money in people's pockets to enjoy a higher and more prosperous standard of living.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Unfortunately, we do not have time for further questions.

We do have time for further debate.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: *Remarks in Anishiniimowin.*

Good morning. It's always an honour to be able to rise and speak for the people of Kiiwetinoong—but also to be able to speak on Bill 71, the Building More Mines Act.

I hear talk about jobs. I hear talk about economic prosperity. And I know that to open up mines faster, without talking to all First Nations, contravenes the duty to consult—the free, prior, informed consent. I know this government is taking the same approach that has been done for hundreds of years.

When settlers first arrived, the first thing that they did was take our lands. And the second thing that they did is,

they took away our children to Indian residential schools, to kill the Indian in the child.

The colleagues across the way do not understand what the land means for the First Nations in Kiiwetinoong. The land is where we get our language. For me, that's where I learned my language—growing up on the land. The ways of life that we do come from the land. The identity comes from the land. The ways of being come from the land. The history comes from the land. And the gifts that are on the lands were given to us the by Gitchi Manitou, the Creator, and those are called “inherent rights.” That is something that we have as First Nations people, as Nishnawbe people.

It's not about jobs. When the Hudson's Bay Co. arrived in the north, they promised economic prosperity. They promised that if we went trapping—“You will have a livelihood if you bring the furs for us.” They told us everything. That's what settlers do. Settler governments do that, institutions. Right now, today, you cannot even live off being a trapper in the north.

Again, inherent rights—the right to language, the right to way of life, a way of being, identity, history and the gifts that we have on these lands. And if you're going to change the ways of life forever without proper consultation—because you're not talking to all First Nations affected; you're just talking to certain First Nations that are willing to work with you. When you do that, you're dividing and conquering First Nations. It has been done for hundreds of years. That type of work, that type of play, is from the colonial playbook. There is a playbook on how you work with First Nations, how to be colonial. It was written in 1956, by an official from Indigenous affairs. There's a playbook; it's about eight pages long. That's exactly what's going on here. You make it sound so—“Got to be prosperous.”

Yesterday, I heard multiple members talking about treaty rights in relation to this bill and how the bill doesn't impact treaty rights. But it's hard to understand what treaty rights mean if you're not a treaty person. I have treaty rights. It means to be able to practise my ways of life, fishing and hunting on my traditional territories, on those treaty territories.

One example that happens every year, if you're First Nations and you're in a particular treaty area—for example, I'm Treaty 9—is that the government of Canada makes treaty payments. Do you know how much? Four dollars per year for accessing my land, for signing the treaty in 1905, for signing the treaty in 1929. Different treaties have different amounts. The fulfillment of treaty provisions is a legal obligation of governments who sign treaties. Ontario is a signatory to Treaty 9. Out of the number of treaties, 1 to 11, Treaty 9 is the only numbered treaty that has a province's signature on it, and that's Ontario.

0950

I know that there were some members from the government side that spoke on how this legislation does not change the obligations that exist under the treaties with First Nations or the duty to consult. But if a government

has gotten away without ever fulfilling its treaty obligations under a treaty, then the bar to meet treaty obligations is very low. The bar for this government to meet treaty obligations is very low, at best, and at worst, non-existent.

I know that on April 26, leadership from Treaty 9 territory came to Queen's Park to announce a historic court case against the federal government and also the provincial government. The case says that the actual treaty agreed to by the First Nations in Treaty 9 and the crown was that First Nations would retain the decision-making governance over the lands and resources and that the crown would have some governance rights but not the right to take over. What was agreed to was co-jurisdiction or parallel consent—both First Nations and the crown have to consent to developments and activities on Treaty 9 lands, on Treaty 9 territory.

I'm going to share a quote from Attawapiskat First Nation Chief Sylvia Koostachin-Metatawabin: "Back when Treaty 9 was signed, Canada and Ontario made a written text of Treaty 9 on their own, in their headquarters, before ever talking to us First Nations. They then came to talk to us and made promises and commitments to us orally that we agreed to. This oral agreement is not the written text.

"After they got us to sign"—

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I apologize to the member.

I recognize the member from Essex.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Standing order rule 25(g): A member shall not refer to "to any matter that is the subject of a proceeding"—etc. etc.

I'm calling on the Speaker to make a ruling as to whether or not this member should be allowed to proceed in light of rule of 25(g), as he's making extensive reference to subject matters of a legal proceeding.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is a valid point of order. However, I will allow the member from Kiiwetinoong to continue.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch. Just for reference, I know it's not in the courts yet, but they were just making a—I think they had 60 days when they announced that they would put it in the courts.

I think it's important to understand the impacts on—how the approach this government is doing is very colonial. I'm going to go back. I'm going to speak a little bit about treaties—because it has an impact on the treaties that First Nations signed. I want to go back to this date: July 7, 1977. Grand Chief Andy Rickard of Grand Council Treaty No. 9 stood in front of Premier Bill Davis's cabinet to announce the declaration of Nishnawbe Aski Nation to Ontario. This is some of what was said:

"We declare ourselves ... a free and sovereign nation. We bring you a declaration of independence.... Your government has failed to live up to the terms, and the spirit of the treaty.

"We agreed to share. We lived up to the terms of our agreement. We kept the peace, paid honour to the European sovereign, allowed the white man to settle and live

according to his laws, and permitted his religions and cultures to be introduced to our people.

"You agreed to share. You said our rights would never be lost. You did not live up to the agreement."

That was in 1977.

The late Grand Chief Rickard said that it was not that the Ojibway and the Cree were opposed to all development, but that "we are opposed to being offered the so-called choice between massive development schemes which will ruin our land and our way of life, or the equally unacceptable choice of welfare dependence." He goes on to say, "This is like being asked which method of suicide we prefer."

Speaker, it is 2023. These words were said in 1977. Tell me what has changed.

I was part of the committee process when we went to Timmins, when we went to Sudbury. I had hoped that there would be more First Nations voices represented, but I was glad to be able to hear what was being said. This included Mike Koostachin from Attawapiskat, Chief Craig Nootchtai from Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, and Chief Christopher Moonias from Neskantaga.

I want to share a bit of what Chief Moonias told the committee:

"The treaties with the crown, Canada and Ontario have never been honoured. We have never been treated as partners in sharing the land and resources.

"As partners, our nation would have played a role in drafting amendments to the Mining Act which heavily impact our lands, resources and future way of life.

"Instead, I am allowed to comment on Bill 71 and related regulatory amendments as an afterthought. Where is the respect here? Where is the long-term relationship-building which would move us forward together in a good way? Building meaningful nation-to-nation relationships between First Nations, Canada and Ontario is a foundation of free, prior and informed consent. This is the only way mineral development will move forward on our land.

1000

"The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes that mining projects and closure plans need to be reviewed by Indigenous people, whose consent is required. The world is moving forward in terms of Indigenous rights, and here in Ontario, you are recklessly jumping backwards.

"This is also the case for the environment. Already, Ontario doesn't require mining projects to conduct environmental assessments, and the Building More Mines Act will rip away the little protection we had left for the environment and the people of Ontario and Canada.

"It is in the best interests of all parties to strengthen our economy, create good jobs and improve everyone's quality of life, but we can't rob our future of clean water and our precious carbon-storing peatlands, which help protect our environment, just for the rich to get richer."

I think when we talk about the announcement of the legal action that they plan to table, it's a warning to mining development companies that they need to lobby both the

provincial and the federal governments to work with First Nations and make co-jurisdiction happen.

Let me be clear, Speaker: If you do not have the free, prior, informed consent of all First Nations, this will not work. It will lead to conflict. The Ring of Fire will not happen. I know it. You are all speaking from southern Ontario, but I live in the north. I live in those communities. That's what is going to happen. There is no way the mining is happening without, again, the full consultation.

I think there's a huge amount of uncertainty for these companies. I do not see how they will be able to go ahead with any mining in Treaty 9 without, again, the full, prior, informed consent of First Nations, because the more oppressed we are, the stronger we became as nations. Oppression, colonialism: Bring it on.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll move to questions.

Ms. Laura Smith: I want to thank the member opposite for his statement. He talked about good jobs and the environment and the future of our province. I agree; we need good jobs, and the environment is so important, and the world needs what this province has—the critical minerals required for the EV revolution and to support our transition to a green economy.

The opposition has seen the numbers. They know Russia and China have a stronghold on the market—which begs the opposition, why will you not consider approving this act?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: What I don't like about this bill is the approach that you have, where you divide and conquer, where you do not talk to all First Nations in the affected treaty territories, their traditional territories.

I think Neskantaga has been very clear: If you're going to build that road up there to the mine, up to the First Nation—it's through their traditional territory. There is no way it is going through there.

I think with the divide-and-conquer approach, which is very colonial—that will not work. I cannot support colonial legislation.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I want to thank the member from Kiiwetinoong for an excellent speech—one that I hope millions of people will see, because I think they need to understand the issues that are at hand here.

I also have to say I was very shocked at the attempt to shut you down, because I think people need to have the historic background in order to actually come to grips with this issue.

Having listened to you, my sense is that passage of this bill will further undermine any ability to actually negotiate in an even-handed way between, on the one hand, First Nations and, on the other hand, the government of Ontario, to actually develop minerals in places where environmentally it might be possible to do so. Is it fair to say that passage of this bill will make it more difficult to actually come to an agreement in a future on mining?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Thank you to the member for the question.

I think, again, passing this bill, with the colonial way of doing things where you divide and conquer, where you do not speak to all First Nations affected—what that does is, people will start to get together as First Nations, and it will be harder to have these agreements with the mining companies. It will be this government's fault that they cannot move forward. In passing this bill, the government is shooting themselves in the foot. Meegwetch.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Mr. Rob Flack: I appreciate the member opposite's thoughts and views. We shared some time together when we were in the north. I took that time to listen and learn about his concerns, and I respect them.

That being said, my question is simple: Should it take 15 years to open a mine in this province? In the meantime, while we're waiting 15 years, we're losing jobs, not only in southwestern Ontario but in the north—good-paying jobs, sustainable jobs that could benefit your peoples, the economy of the north, everyone.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I think it's going to take 50 years or 100 years to open up a mine if you don't work with First Nations—because that's what's going on. You cannot continue to divide and conquer. You cannot continue to just be colonial. Again, it is on you if you pass this bill without talking to all First Nations. You've already done it. It has already been done, where you continue to have no informed consent from First Nations. I think it's going to take longer if you pass this bill.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to thank my colleague the member for Kiiwetinoong for his very enlightening remarks about the meaning of free, prior and informed consent. He walked us through why this legislation violates those principles of free, prior and informed consent, why it undermines the principles of reconciliation, why it goes against the spirit and intent of Treaty 9.

I wondered if the member could summarize what free, prior and informed consent would have looked like if the government had respected those principles in developing this bill.

1010

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Free, prior and informed consent is—that is free. The government comes to the community. That First Nation does not spend any resources on being informed. "Informed" is, we listened to what's being proposed. We listen in our language and in a language we can understand. Once we're informed, that's when the First Nation will say if they consent to it or not.

Because the government is just plowing ahead—plowing ahead with the legislative bulldozer, I should say—it's starting to sound like it's a re-election scheme. I keep telling you here in the House. I've been very clear—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. That's time for the answer.

We'll move to the next question.

Ms. Laura Smith: I want to thank the member again for his questions, and I want to revisit something that we talked about.

The environment is important. The jobs are important. I talked about Russia and China having a stranglehold on the market. And 15 years is a very long time to wait to get something done for the economy, for the environment, for anyone who wants a job. This is literally going to stop things from moving in our province.

We talked about Russia and China. I really think that the member opposite needs to consider—does he think that they're viable trading partners for critical minerals? If not, can you explain why you're continuously creating obstacles? We want to create solutions rather than put up more obstacles. All of the respective consultations—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you for the question.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: First Nations are not red tape. First Nations are not obstacles. We have to be able to understand that this government is the obstacle to clean drinking water for First Nations. This government is the obstacle to be able to have access to good mental health systems in the north. We cannot continue to have young girls at the ages of 10, 11, 12 years old dying by suicide. That's not prosperity.

The lands that are in those traditional territories—that's where we are as First Nations people. We've been here for thousands of years. You cannot just come over here and then say, "We want to build mines in 15 years." I don't know how long you've all been here, but we've been here for thousands of years. We are the caretakers of these lands. We will continue to look after these lands. We will continue to protect our rights as First Nations people, our Treaty rights, our inherent—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. We don't have time to move to further debates on the bill.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to members' statements.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Mr. Lorne Coe: The Ontario government is investing an additional \$202 million annually in the province's Homelessness Prevention Program and Indigenous Supportive Housing Program. This new funding builds on the government's investment of nearly \$4.4 billion over the past three years to grow and enhance community and supportive housing.

As part of this funding, the region of Durham will be receiving \$18.6 million. This is an increase of more than \$7.1 million, or about 62% over the last year. Durham Regional Chair John Henry, who participated in a recent announcement made by Durham-based government members, had this to say: "This investment will help fund supportive housing programs, community outreach services and housing-focused shelter programs ... critical

supports" that "address the needs of Durham region's vulnerable residents."

Once again, Durham-based government MPPs are standing up for residents in the region of Durham.

PORTUGUESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY

Mr. Chris Glover: The Ontario NDP leader and I share the honour of representing Little Portugal in our ridings.

This year, the Portuguese Canadian community is celebrating the 70th year of immigration to Canada. On May 13, 1953, the first Portuguese pioneers arrived in Canada from the Azores. In the 70 years since that first journey, the dependents of those first pioneers have gone on to achieve greatness, building a strong and diverse Canada that Portuguese Canadians proudly call home.

A volunteer organizing committee of community leaders has been working hard to organize a year-long program to honour Portuguese pioneers.

I would like to thank Matthew Correia for inviting me to the first event, a celebratory luncheon last Sunday benefiting the Magellan Community Foundation.

I'd also like to thank Manuel DaCosta, who is chairing the foundation to build a long-term-care home for Portuguese seniors.

On Saturday, May 13, there is the Portuguese Canadian Walk of Fame induction ceremony, followed shortly afterward by the unveiling of a monument to the Portuguese pioneers.

And this coming Sunday, join the Portuguese Festa at Nathan Phillips Square, with food, music and performances by international recording artists Pedro Abrunhosa and Bárbara Bandeira.

Also coming up: The Do West Fest in Little Portugal, organized by AnaBela Taborda and the board of the Little Portugal BIA.

And the highlight of the year will be this year's 35th annual—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): That's 90 seconds. Thank you very much.

Next members' statement.

VOLUNTEERS

Ms. Donna Skelly: I want to take the opportunity this morning to recognize the work and the value volunteers bring to our communities. They make our communities stronger, more vibrant and more caring. The fact that volunteers offer their time and skills to support others is a testament to their kindness and their compassion. They give of themselves and don't expect anything in return.

Let me speak for a moment about an amazing volunteer organization in my riding of Flamborough—Glanbrook, and that is the Rotary Club of Flamborough. This organization supports dozens of causes in the Waterdown-Flamborough area—everything from scholarships for students to Christmas baskets for seniors.

This past weekend, I spoke at the Rotary Club's Family Fun Run, where all the funds raised supported Food4Kids in Flamborough.

The Rotary organization and so many other service clubs are made up of selfless volunteers.

I also want to encourage the many organizations that benefit from the hard work of their volunteers to nominate exceptional individuals in their communities for an Ontario service award to acknowledge those who go above and beyond for the service of others.

I want to offer my sincere gratitude to the tens of thousands of volunteers who every day make Ontario a better place to live.

DON SMITH

Mr. Joel Harden: "Who makes politics happen?" That's a question people often ask. Some folks assume that it's us in this building, arguing over policy, but people who have earned a seat in this place know differently. Behind us are volunteers and donors, families and friends. We may often get the limelight, but those are the folks who build the stage.

My friend Don Smith, who we lost last week, before his 80th birthday, was a first-class stage builder. But for me, he was a man of mystery, because he rarely talked about himself. Don had been a journalist, a city councillor in the great city of Thunder Bay, and a long-time assistant to a federal member of Parliament. He was a guy focused on making relationships better. He was there for two life partners who died from degenerative diseases. He was loyal to them, and he was loyal to all of us.

He was also fun. Don liked to square dance and waltz. He lived by a policy of eating a piece of chocolate a day.

He was very active in his local housing co-op.

I will never forget Don. They rarely make people like him. But all of us know people like this in our community.

So I want to salute Don Smith today: To a life well-lived, to a community well-served.

New Democrats are going to be remembering Don this Friday at 464 Metcalfe Street, at 6 p.m. If you knew Don and you have a story to share, come break bread with us. Let's remember this extraordinary man and his extraordinary life.

Rest in power, my friend.

1020

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Laura Smith: Recently, I joined Minister Mulroney to announce that we are one step closer to getting shovels in the ground on the Yonge North subway extension. The new subway extension is going to bring some much-needed relief for not only Thornhill but the GTA and York region.

Madam Speaker, did you know that Thornhill was the original transit-oriented community? If we look back, as early as the 19th century, Thornhill served as a critical junction for transportation and was the natural pit stop for

travellers moving north. This included American Loyalists who were fleeing American invasion during the War of 1812. And in 1885, Toronto's first commuter railway, the Metropolitan radial railway York-Simcoe was opened in Thornhill and stopped right there. As a key stopping point for travellers, Thornhill became a hub for social and economic activity.

I'm so delighted that this historic legacy of Thornhill is able to continue through the Yonge North subway extension. This project will undoubtedly bolster the local economy, bring jobs, and eliminate so many of the buses on Yonge Street—helping reduce greenhouse emissions and congestion.

As a resident of the original transit-oriented community, I look forward to the new subway helping the people of Thornhill and Richmond Hill and future generations of those in York region get where they need to go in a faster and more efficient way.

COST OF LIVING

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Constituents in Windsor West and across the province are feeling unbearable financial pressure every single day. The cost of everything has gone up, and this Conservative government does nothing to rein in corporations that are price gouging Ontarians. Families are feeling it at the grocery store, gas pump, and with heating bills, auto insurance, housing costs and more. Parents are juggling multiple jobs and are still struggling to put food on the table. Kids are going to school hungry. Food bank usage across the province is at a record high, and the number of people accessing food banks continues to climb.

Recipients of social assistance can't keep up with sharp rent increases or the cost of putting food on the table. People with disabilities are living far below the poverty line and are getting pushed into deeper poverty because of government policy. The Conservatives choose to leave people living in legislated poverty. And seniors on fixed incomes can't keep up with rising costs either. They are also increasingly accessing food banks.

In Windsor, residents are paying some of the highest auto and home insurance rates in the province, yet this government won't address postal code discrimination in the insurance industry.

Rental housing costs continue skyrocketing because the Conservatives cut rent control.

My constituents deserve a government that works hard to make life easier for them, rather than implementing policies that make life more difficult.

My NDP colleagues and I will continue to fight for Ontarians, to fight for better, because better is possible.

TAMIL GENOCIDE

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: May is the month of genocide remembrance for the Tamil community. As a young boy who survived the 21st century's most brutal genocide, it is my honour to rise today to acknowledge Tamil

Genocide Education Week, which will take place from May 12 to May 18 in Ontario, Canada, and across the world.

Bill 104, which I introduced in 2019, was passed unanimously in this Legislature in 2021, recognizing and marking the significance of educating about the Tamil genocide. The height of the genocide took place in May 2009, with the Mullivaikkal massacre.

Tragically, the Tamil people have faced systematic structural genocide since Sri Lanka's independence, and it is still ongoing.

Mr. Speaker, recent events have revealed that the Sri Lankan state's targeted destruction of places of worship and places of significance to Tamil people accounts to cultural genocide. These temples have been family deity temples for many of my constituents from Scarborough–Rouge Park and across Canada.

Tamil Canadians living in Ontario continue to experience the impacts of intergenerational trauma from the genocide, making the Tamil Genocide Education Week Act more important now than ever.

On May 18, the Tamil community around the world will come together to commemorate Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day.

I encourage everyone to learn about the Tamil Genocide, and together, we can say “Never again.”

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Mr. Robert Bailey: Children and Youth in Care Day in Ontario is just around the corner, and I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of young people and their stories and experiences. This year's #ForgetMeNot campaign will highlight the stories of young people and their resilience in overcoming obstacles. Children and youth in Ontario's child welfare system deserve to be recognized and celebrated. This campaign is another way to remind local communities and government service providers that young Ontarians deserve to have critical supports in place, which is why our government recently invested \$170 million over the next three years for youth leaving care through the new Ready, Set, Go program.

Speaker, children and youth are the future of this great province and this country, and we need to ensure that they are equipped with the tools they need to be successful.

It is also important to recognize the hard work of all the children's aid societies and their staff—in particular, a special shout-out to my local Children's Aid Society of Sarnia-Lambton, led by their executive director, Dawn Flegel, who will be with us later today.

As part of the #ForgetMeNot campaign, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and Children's Aid Foundation of Canada would like to invite all members to their reception today at 5 p.m. in room 228. I hope to see you all there.

PROVINCIAL DAY OF ACTION ON LITTER

Mr. John Yakabuski: Today is Ontario's fourth annual Day of Action on Litter. The sad reality is that we should never have had to have a Day of Action on Litter, because littering is entirely preventable. Litter doesn't happen by accident; it only happens because someone chooses to drop a coffee cup along the sidewalk or toss a pop can out the window as they're travelling along a rural road. It doesn't happen without the conscious decision by someone to do so.

Speaker, we can start by taking personal responsibility. Littering is one of those things that you might have already guessed I despise deeply. It's something that as little children we were taught not to do, and something my wife, Vicky, and I have passed on to our children. I recall many times when our children would come home from school with candy wrappers in their pockets, because the last thing they were going to do was drop that wrapper on the ground.

Litter is not only a visible blight on this beautiful land we've been blessed with; it is very harmful to our environment and dangerous for pets that may consume it.

However, it is gratifying to see concerted community efforts and litter pickup days all across Ontario at this time of year to remove what has been deposited through the winter months. Having said that, it would be much better if it had never found its way onto our landscape at all.

We should all make a pledge to take our individual and collective responsibility seriously, because Ontario is not only ours to discover; it is ours to keep beautiful.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm pleased to recognize and welcome the mayor of the township of Centre Wellington, Shawn Watters, who is here at Queen's Park today.

Welcome. It's great to see you here from the riding of Wellington–Halton Hills.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'd like to acknowledge Shannon Thornton, who is in the gallery with us today. Shannon has worked in my office for four and a half years—both in the constituency office and Queen's Park. She's leaving today, and she's going on to Ontario Tech University.

Shannon, I want to wish you all the best in your new job at Ontario Tech University. Thank you for your service here at Queen's Park.

Ms. Chandra Pasma: On behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to welcome, from the Ontario Autism Coalition, vice-president Kate Dudley-Logue, along with Michau Van Speyk.

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: I want to welcome a great Ontarian, someone who loves his province: the Honourable Justice Jack Grossman, retired from the Ontario Court of Justice of North York.

1030

Mr. Jeff Burch: Randall Marsh from Port Colborne is page captain today and has very proud family and friends from Niagara visiting in the members' gallery: Scott and Deonna Marsh, Randall's parents; Randall's aunt Darah Wiens and her two children, Deacon and Daytona; his aunt Danielle Randall and her daughter Kennedy, from Fort Erie; and his cousin Jaena.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Brian Riddell: It's my honour and pleasure today to announce Joan Fisk, who is the executive officer for United Way Waterloo Region Communities and currently the chair of the college of business and economics advisory board at the University of Guelph. She has done wonderful things for our community, and I thank her for it.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Il me fait plaisir aujourd'hui de vous présenter mes deux assistantes : une, Mélanie Gagné, qui est mon assistante, avec moi depuis cinq ans, qui travaille dans la circonscription, et aussi ma nouvelle LA, une autre assistante législative, Adriana Naffat. Bienvenue à Queen's Park. Bienvenue dans votre Chambre.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I want to recognize a few special guests in the Legislature this morning. The winners of the future builders scholarship powered by Scottie Barnes from the Skilled Trades College of Canada are with us here today. I want to welcome Serjenka Paul, Malik D'Cruz, Alden Patterson, Abrahan Belisario.

Congratulations on starting your exciting careers in the skilled trades, and welcome to Queen's Park.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I would like to welcome Kevin Goa, a grade 9 student at Forest Hill Collegiate Institute.

Welcome to the Legislature. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: I'm so happy to welcome my hard-working EA Sarah Bokhari. She's also celebrating a milestone birthday today.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's my pleasure to welcome Dana McKiel and representatives from Football Canada, Football Toronto and the Toronto Argonauts.

Dana, to you and your colleagues: It's so good to see you here today.

Mr. Graham McGregor: I first met this visitor about 10 years ago on my first-ever PC election day that I volunteered on. Please join me in welcoming former Queen's Park staffer and long-time PC activist Brooke Timpson.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I'd like to welcome, from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies: Nicole Bonnie, Ashleigh Egerton, Sean McGrady, and Samuel Ashirbekov.

Welcome to the House.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: It's my pleasure this morning to welcome the members of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects. They hosted a great breakfast this morning. I want to thank them for the important work they do in making our communities safe, resilient and inclusive.

Ms. Doly Begum: I'm very excited to introduce some special guests to the House. We've got some long-time

New Democrats, dedicated volunteers and leaders and community builders in the House today.

Please welcome Dan Danielson, Bob Spencer, Ian Roberts, Paula Masterson, and Reshad Ahmed to the House.

I also have Tejas Dhebana, a wonderful intern who has joined us in our office.

Welcome to your House.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: I'd like to welcome students here today from Central Peel Secondary School in Brampton. These remarkable students took part in an international space competition at NASA. Out of 26,000 participants, these two teams from Central Peel placed first in their respective categories, and they're the only Canadian teams to be recognized this year.

I'd like to introduce the students, up on my right: Kashyap Patel, Mashraful Choudhury, Ruhaim Ali, Mehtab Cheema, Anant Duggal, Tanvir Gahunia, Kushal Patel, Pragalva Sharma, Mahimn Patel, Deep Patel, Rehan Jaffar, and Neel Pathak.

They're joined by their teachers: Kiranbir Sahota, Harbinder Sahota, and Simona Matei.

Congratulations and well done, guys.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's my pleasure to introduce Darah Wiens and her two children, Deacon and Daytona, from Chippawa, Niagara Falls; Danielle Randall and her daughter Kennedy, from Fort Erie; and Jaena Randall.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Neil Lumsden: I'm also pleased to welcome the Grey Cup champion Toronto Argonauts to the chamber today, and members of Football Toronto and Football Ontario. There will be a reception in 228 at 11:45. Come by and see what I believe is the oldest professional trophy in the land on display.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to give a big shout-out to the students from Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic High School. These amazing students, part of Beaverworx, FRC team 2609, were the champions at the FIRST Robotics world championship in Texas—the only Canadian team to compete in the finals.

Congratulations. You've made us proud.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I would like to welcome Manny and Roslyn from my office.

You're not leaving today, but I'm glad that you're part of our team. Welcome.

Hon. Michael Parsa: Speaker, I'd like to welcome the CEO of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, Nicole Bonnie, and CEO of the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada, Valerie McMurtry, to the Legislature this morning.

I'd also like to give a shout-out to Van, Rose, Samuel, Kaygan, Byanka, Troy, and Aidan, who were all part of the OACAS #ForgetMeNot campaign.

Welcome to Queen's Park. I look forward to meeting you all later on this afternoon.

WEARING OF HOCKEY JERSEY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Peterborough–Kawartha on a point of order.

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, last night, my Peterborough Petes defeated the North Bay Battalion and are the Bobby Orr cup champions for the eastern conference of the OHL. So I seek unanimous consent for the member for North Bay to wear the Peterborough Petes jersey today in the chamber.

Mr. Will Bouma: Nipissing.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Peterborough–Kawartha is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow the member for Nipissing, the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, to wear the Peterborough Petes Jersey today. Agreed? Agreed.

QUESTION PERIOD

NURSES

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yesterday, we kicked off National Nursing Week. Doesn't it say so much that just yesterday, this Conservative government passed a law that's going to sell off our health care system to corporations that can make money off the backs of sick people? I want to remind everyone here that this is something that the nurses of this province deeply oppose.

The Conservatives are going down a path that both Quebec and British Columbia already found was a dead end. It cost everyone more—the government, individual patients. It worsened health outcomes. In the end, it made it harder as well on health care workers.

To the Premier: How will you stop the hemorrhaging of nurses out of our public health care system when there was nothing in the legislation to prevent it?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: With the greatest of respect, the NDP could not be more wrong about Bill 60.

I will highlight what the Auditor General's report on outpatient surgeries in Ontario emphasized—that the experience in other Canadian jurisdictions is that community surgical centres can treat 20% to 30% more patients within the same amount of time. Why are other Canadian jurisdictions doing it, and why is Ontario doing it more? Because we want people to get access to surgery and not sit in wait lines.

1040

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Marit Stiles: This is how out of touch this government is. If they actually got out of the backrooms and talked to the people on the front line—the nurses, the health care workers—they'd know the mess that they have created already in health care staffing.

Ontario's nurses have been chronically overworked, underpaid and undermined by this Conservative government, and now nurses are currently without a contract. This week, we're going to be tabling petitions with thousands of signatures calling on this government to present a fair and meaningful offer to their negotiations.

Speaker, to the Premier: Will his government give Ontario's nurses a contract that shows how much we value them?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: There is no doubt that we on this side of the House understand the very valuable, important role that nurses play in our health care system, which is, frankly, exactly why at the beginning of the pandemic we initiated a Learn and Stay program under the leadership of the college of nurses ministry. It allows nurses who want to practise in the province of Ontario and train in the province of Ontario to have their tuition and their books covered if they are willing to practise in an underserved area for two years after graduation. What did that one program do? It ensured that we had the highest number of students applying for those programs.

There are many, many people who want to practise in their communities in health care, and we're going to enable that through our legislation.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Final supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: They are leaving Ontario. You cannot recruit into a broken program. With all of their efforts, we're going to be 33,000 nurses and PSWs short in this province, and that's a fact.

Speaker, that response does not give me a lot of hope, because while this government says one thing in this House, they say quite another thing to Ontario's nurses. And their actions speak louder than their words.

This government continues to take our nurses to court. It's a fact. They're fighting with them and with other public sector workers over their unconstitutional wage restraint law.

Speaker, to the Premier: Will he celebrate National Nursing Week by ending his campaign to take Ontario's nurses to court?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Another thing that we did when we came back after a larger majority victory in June was, in fact, to talk to and work with our partners at the College of Nurses of Ontario. We said, "We have far too many internationally educated and trained nurses waiting in the queue to come and practise in our communities. Would you work with us to ensure that those individuals who are waiting at the college of nurses for assessment get that assessment review, and ultimately approved licence, faster?" What did that do? It meant that we had a historic high of new, internationally trained nurses practising, again, in our communities, in our hospitals.

In our ability to ensure that whether it is new nurses being trained, internationally educated nurses who want to come to Ontario—we are doing the work here.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Marit Stiles: Ontarians are waking up today to news that expanded for-profit private health care is now the law of the land. In rural and northern communities, they are rightly worried about the impact that two-tier health care is going to have on already strained hospitals and community health centres.

I was in Thunder Bay last week, and like many communities across the north, they're worried that the local hospitals that they proudly support and rely on are going to be closing their doors as staff are forced out by low wages and private sector competition in the south.

Speaker, to the Premier: Why is this government putting private profits ahead of the needs of patients in the north?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I want to remind members opposite that in fact we have over 900 community diagnostic operating rooms in the province of Ontario right now.

What are we doing through Bill 60? We are ensuring that your constituents who are waiting in line, who are waiting for scheduled surgeries, have the opportunity to get that faster. We did it at the beginning of the year by announcing three expanded cataract surgeries in Windsor, in Kitchener-Waterloo and in Ottawa. That means that people are back with their families, back on the job, back in community, where they want to be. They don't want to be on a wait-list. And we're expanding because we want to make sure that your constituents have the ability to get access to the health care they deserve in community faster.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): And the supplementary question?

Ms. Marit Stiles: I want to remind the minister and the Premier that 2.2 million Ontarians don't have access to a family doctor right now. In northern Ontario, we know the shortage is chronic, and it's going to get worse now.

As these for-profit corporate clinics set up shop in more lucrative urban locations, it's going to be even harder or even impossible for smaller rural hospitals to recruit and retain the staff they need. That is what we are hearing from the front lines. You should listen to them.

Northern and First Nations communities know that this government's plan to replace community-based care with private, for-profit clinics is going to make their access to health care even worse.

Speaker, to the Premier: Why are you making it even harder for people in the north to get the care they need?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: The NDP will continue to say the status quo is good enough. It's not good enough. We need to have people accessing care faster, and one of the ways that we are doing this is absolutely expanding the clinical and diagnostic piece.

The other part is actually building out the health human resources so that, as an example, because of the passage of Bill 60, we have as-of-right in the province of Ontario—the first Canadian jurisdiction to do so—which means that a physician practising in British Columbia today can start working in Ontario tomorrow. We want to eliminate the barriers, eliminate the red tape to make sure that

individuals who want to come here, who want to practise, who want to be in our world-class medical facilities, have that ability without the many, many red tape barriers that we've seen in the past.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The final supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, the minister doesn't want to talk about the north, I guess.

Let me introduce a concept to you: highway health care. Highway health care is what happens when this government forces northerners to travel long distances, sometimes thousands of kilometres, away from their families to receive the health care that they need. The Northern Health Travel Grant Program gives them \$100 for a hotel. Well, good luck finding anything for that price anywhere. And worrying about that when you're sick? Just great.

To the Premier: If he's focused on destroying our health care system and more northerners are going to have to travel even further to get the care they need, will he at least enhance these supports?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Is the leader of the NDP suggesting that when we expand MRIs into new facilities, new communities in the north, in the south, in rural communities that have never had an MRI in their hospital before—that that is status quo that you're happy with? It is not. Our government is making the changes that will ensure that people will get access in their communities, and one of the ways that we're doing that is actually integrating the health care system. Instead of having individual hospitals, individual organizations, we're making sure that those partnerships ensure that individuals who are on wait-lists, whether it's for cataracts, hips or knee replacement surgeries, can get it in their community.

That is what Bill 60 is about. It is about challenging the status quo, ensuring we're engaging in innovation that is happening across Ontario. We're empowering hospitals to do that.

LANDLORD AND TENANT BOARD

Ms. Jessica Bell: My question is to the Attorney General.

The Ombudsman's damning report called out the Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board's failure to provide justice to thousands of Ontarians.

The Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario has been sounding the alarm for years that tenants have been struggling to participate in the LTB's online hearing process.

We read in the Ombudsman's report about a woman who waited 10 months for a hearing, only to have trouble logging on on the day, and as a result, her case was dismissed and her access to justice was denied.

1050

To ensure everyone gets a fair hearing, experts are calling for in-person hearings to be easily available to people who request them. Can this government implement that recommendation?

Hon. Doug Downey: I appreciate the report from the Ombudsman. One of the things that he did say was that when we took government in 2018, the previous government, supported by the NDP—and I'm paraphrasing what the Ombudsman said, of course. He said that the technology was redundant, that it was broken.

We have invested \$28.5 million in cutting-edge systems so that people can access justice.

In terms of in-person hearings, people can request in-person help. They can go to locations in London, Ottawa, Toronto, and other spaces.

We also have a mobile service to help people who don't have the technology.

So we are doing things to make sure that we're doing digital-first but not digital-only.

I look forward to the supplementary question, when I'll talk about some of the other investments that we've made.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question? The member for Toronto Centre.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: There has only been less than 1% of actual hearings that were actually in person.

My question is to the Premier, on the same specific issue.

The Ombudsman's scathing report included many heartbreaking stories.

A tenant's home was so unsafe that it made her ill, so in December 2020, she then applied to the LTB. Her case was then heard only 16 months later, after she already made the difficult decision to leave the home that she could afford.

This all happened under this government's watch—where the caseload blew up from 20,000 and in 2022 to 38,000.

You can't blame the Liberals for everything. They broke it, but you made it worse. There's still no relief in sight.

When will the government actually own up to their failures and table a detailed report with timelines to clear the historically high backlog of the LTB?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members will take their seats.

I remind members to make their comments through the Chair.

The Attorney General.

Hon. Doug Downey: In fact, the backlog did grow, because there was a pandemic. And when we chose to protect tenants and put a freeze on evictions, of course the backlog grew by a little bit. But we've invested. If it was left to the NDP, who knows what the number would have been? We pivoted very quickly to online hearings. We made sure that people had their day in court, and we moved very fast. We made investments in staff. We made investments in technology. We've doubled the number of adjudicators. We have done so many things.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, what the NDP have done. They've said: "Have hearings." "Don't have hearings." "Have them in person." "Have them quick." I think I'm going to start calling it the party of turnstile.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Graham McGregor: My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

Like many communities across Ontario, the city of Brampton is rapidly growing. Every day, new families are calling Brampton home, and along with this rapid growth comes the need to build new transportation networks.

For 15 years, the previous Liberal government stuck with the status quo and ignored Brampton's growing transportation needs. Rather than making urgently needed investments into large-scale transportation infrastructure, the Liberals were more focused on building bike lanes—it's true; you did that.

The people of Brampton, the region of Peel and the surrounding communities are counting on our government to make the critical transportation investments and upgrades to keep Ontario moving.

Speaker, could the minister please explain how our government is expanding public transportation networks in my community and beyond?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I thank the member for the question.

Speaker, unlike the previous government, we're focused on getting results for the entire province, including for the city of Brampton. Our government is making incredible progress to improve transportation infrastructure that was neglected in Brampton for far too long under the Liberals and the NDP. This includes upgrades to GO Transit stations in Brampton—one of the busiest stations along the Kitchener GO line.

The upgrades at Bramalea GO station will support two-way, all-day GO service along the Kitchener GO line and will make travel easier for the growing Brampton community. The enhanced Bramalea GO will include a new bus loop, more parking and an improved platform that is connected by tunnels and elevators.

Speaker, this government is focused on making life easier for the people of Brampton, and I look forward to providing an update on the Bramalea station in the near future.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary?

Mr. Graham McGregor: Thank you to the minister for that answer.

Speaking from experience—I take the Kitchener line most days; I took it this morning—those trains are packed. What a great investment by this government in the Kitchener line. And it's great to learn about the upgrades at the Bramalea GO station. These improvements will make travel more convenient for individuals and families who rely on this very busy GO line.

The previous Liberal government failed to plan ahead for the growth in transportation needs of Brampton. Even now, Liberals and NDP are out of touch with reality and they take every opportunity to oppose the transportation solutions that Brampton needs, including Highway 413. I guess they didn't learn their lesson from the last election. As a result, many residents and commuters are delayed every day with the endless traffic congestion and gridlock,

which causes frustration, but it's also a threat to our province's economic prosperity.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is addressing the urgent transportation needs in Brampton and—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I share the member's frustration.

The NDP and the Liberals think they know what's best for Brampton residents, but if it were up to them, nothing would get built. That is unacceptable.

We have a balanced approach that expands public transit, like Bramalea GO, and that builds new highways, like Highway 413.

In the last election, the people of Peel and Brampton spoke, and our government is listening. I hear first-hand from residents in Peel region of the impact that gridlock is having on their lives and on their economy. It's unacceptable. We won't stick with the status quo. We are building Highway 413.

Speaker, now is the time to act, and now is the time to build.

HEALTH CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé.

Last week, the Canadian press received access-to-freedom-of-information documents from the Minister of Health that said Ontario's lack of a long COVID strategy has led to "fragmented" clinics that offer little to no support to patients. The health ministry's strategic policy branch wrote: "Ontario does not have a coordinated approach to care for patients with a post-COVID-19 condition."

My question to the minister: Aside from billing codes—can the Minister of Health tell the 750,000 Ontarians living with long COVID where they can access the care they so desperately need?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: With the greatest of respect, the member opposite is dismissing the fact that we've actually worked with the Ontario Medical Association to make sure that there are appropriate billing codes for our primary care practitioners who are treating and assisting individuals with long COVID. It is an important piece to make sure that individuals with long COVID are not left abandoned by our health care system—which is not going to happen under this government. To suggest that this is a dismissive and not important piece to ensure that individuals who are suffering with long COVID have the support that they need in the province of Ontario, I think, shows a great deal of disrespect to those individuals.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Since there was no money, several hospitals have established long COVID clinics, but they have mostly relied on redeployed resources from other areas of the hospital.

Again, I quote from a briefing that the minister received: "While some providers are responding to the immediate demand for post-COVID care, these offerings are insufficient, fragmented and unsustainable without dedicated funding. This model is not sustainable and could result in little to no support for Ontarians with" post-COVID needs, the briefing warned the minister.

These clinics are currently at risk of closure due to the lack of funding. The minister's briefing documents said, and everybody agrees, that a provincially coordinated approach would be most effective.

Minister, where is the dedicated funding for a provincially coordinated approach to care for the 750,000 Ontarians with long COVID, like BC, Alberta and Quebec are already funding?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Our Premier and our government have always been there for the people of Ontario as we experience, whether it is the pandemic—ensuring that our public health units, our primary care doctors and our hospitals had sufficient resources. And we will continue to do that.

1100

There is excellent work happening, in our research hospital facilities as well as at our universities, to study and assess the impacts of long COVID. As we develop and see how those outcomes continue, we will be there, as we have been through the entire pandemic, to make sure that they have the resources to continue to serve these important long COVID patients.

ENERGY RATES

Mr. Dave Smith: I have a question for the Minister of Energy.

I know that individuals and families in my community, along with people across Ontario, are looking for relief on their home energy costs. While natural gas rates are gradually coming down, the costs remain high, and people are still feeling the financial impact that global economic instability is causing to everyone.

When our government was first elected in 2018, we made a commitment to make life more affordable for Ontario's families. We must make every effort to deliver on our commitment by providing more ways for Ontarians to take control of their energy bills and encourage energy conservation.

Speaker, can the minister please explain what actions our government is taking to make home heating more affordable and cleaner?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks to the member from Peterborough, and congratulations to his Petes on advancing to the OHL final against the London Knights.

Since day one, our government has been working hard to make sure that life is more affordable for the people of Ontario, particularly on the energy file.

That's why, last fall, I was pleased to announce \$4.5 million for the Clean Home Heating Initiative, where members of his community in Peterborough; members in London, home of the Knights; members in St. Catharines,

home of the IceDogs; and members in Sault Ste. Marie, home of the Greyhounds, can apply to get a hybrid home heating system. Just last week, I was pleased to join the Attorney General and the member from Barrie—Innisfil in Barrie—home of the Colts—to announce that our government is bringing that investment up to a total of \$8.2 million, so that we can offer this additional program to another 500 homes across the city.

This is great news for energy bills, but it's also great news for the environment.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Dave Smith: I can confirm that all of Peterborough is energized for the Petes right now.

It's encouraging to hear that our government has introduced yet another way for consumers to keep costs down, save money and take control of their energy bills.

While this is positive news, many individuals and families across our province are struggling with energy costs because of ongoing global economic instability. Our government must show respect for the people of Ontario by continuing to implement programs that offer choices and will help reduce the costs.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how the people of Ontario can benefit from the Clean Home Heating Initiative?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks again to the member, and good luck to his Petes.

Our government is excited to provide this opportunity to more communities and more homeowners across the province to lower not just their home energy bills, but also do their part for the environment and reduce emissions. The Clean Home Heating Initiative is going to allow most households to leverage Ontario's world-class green energy, clean energy grid that we have to both heat and cool their homes with a hybrid heat pump that switches between electricity and natural gas. Switching to hybrid home heating could save them about \$300 a year on their energy bills. That's a significant amount. They would also be cutting their emissions by a third, which is great news for the environment.

We know that people across the province want to have more choice, and we've been providing that. People across the province want to have more control over their monthly costs, especially on their energy bills, and I'm proud to say that the Ontario government is delivering on that.

NURSES

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier.

The Conservative government's Bill 124 was ruled unconstitutional by the court. Health care workers, the unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers and the general public know that Bill 124 is not only unconstitutional, but it is disrespectful and it specifically targets women-led professions like nursing. Nurses in Windsor-Essex are leaving my community and going to work in Detroit, Michigan, where they are better paid and more respected. Bill 124 continues to push more Canadian nurses to leave Ontario for work.

Speaker, it's National Nursing Week, and nurses want to know why the Premier is targeting them and other women-led professions by suppressing their wages and appealing the Bill 124 court ruling.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: Thank you to the member for that question.

I would like to wish all nurses a happy Nursing Week.

I was actually at Centennial College yesterday and met with a class. It was their first day of nursing, so congratulations to all those new students who are entering the profession.

We're seeing a record number of students entering into the nursing field because of some of the incentives that we're offering, like the new Learn and Stay program, which the Minister of Health was acknowledging early on. This is 2,500 students who will have the opportunity for free tuition, to enter into the nursing profession, paramedic, lab tech—all their education covered, with a commitment to stay in their communities for two years.

Another interesting incentive we're offering is the Community Commitment Program for Nurses, which was launched in June 2022 at selected hospitals in Ontario to address nursing shortages. In fact, in about 10 months, Windsor Regional Hospital has signed up over 200 nurses in this program. This program offers qualified nursing staff \$25,000 to sign up and then serve at least two years in a designated community.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: There are hundreds of nursing positions in Windsor that go unfilled every single month because of Bill 124. We have a shortage of nurses, and taking them to court to continue to suppress their wages is not the way to make them feel appreciated or respected.

The Premier posted a video for National Nursing Week, and he said, "Nurses are the foundation of our health care system, and I encourage everyone to take time this Nursing Week to thank our wonderful nurses for everything they do."

To celebrate National Nursing Week, will the Premier stop fighting nurses in court and will he prove his proclaimed gratitude for them by repealing Bill 124 today—or is he just full of it?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the member to withdraw.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: I think the member failed to hear me—200 nurses signed up at Windsor Regional Hospital.

I have a quote from the CEO of Windsor Regional Hospital: "It has been hugely successful."

"These government programs have really benefited us with recruiting," said Karen Riddell, Windsor Regional Hospital's chief operating officer and chief nursing executive.

“We have another 111 graduates starting this summer. That’s a significant number.

“As the province expands these HR strategies, these are really important to maintaining our workforce.”

That was from Karen Riddell of Windsor Regional Hospital in your riding.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. Stephen Blais: My question is for the Premier.

Climate change is beginning to have a real and measurable impact on how we live our lives.

In 2017, the city of Ottawa and communities along the Ottawa River were hit with flooding events that had not been seen in 50 years. Hundreds of residents were impacted, including in east Ottawa. Many lost their homes. In 2019, record levels of water returned, and this time only worse. Thousands of residents across the region were affected. The city declared a state of emergency, and the army had to be called in to protect critical infrastructure like water treatment facilities, and neighbourhoods.

After a few years of reprieve, generational flooding has returned to Ottawa. If not for the most recent events, this year would also be the worst flooding in 50 years.

Three generational floods in seven years—homeowners are tired, volunteers are burnt out, and this can’t keep on happening.

What actions is this government going to take to understand exactly what is happening, and, more importantly, what are they going to do to stop it and protect residents from its impacts?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through to you the member: The city of Ottawa staff contacted our municipal service office yesterday regarding the spring flooding and requested that a Provincial Disaster Assessment Team be deployed to assess the impact. City staff noted to our ministry that the damage is localized, but it’s significant in some of the neighbourhoods around the Ottawa River. According to municipal staff, they’ve requested that the PDAT team come up. A meeting is scheduled with the city tomorrow.

As all members know, in the spring, there are going to be situations like we’re experiencing in Whitewater, in the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke’s riding. My ministry office is available in all regions of the province to reach out when a provincial disaster team is required.

1110

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Stephen Blais: In 2017, after the flooding, affected homeowners were able to apply for disaster recovery assistance for Ontarians to cover the cost of the cleanup, repair essential property and their basic expenses. After the flooding in 2019, residents were also afforded that opportunity, and I know it was greatly appreciated.

Unfortunately, after the devastating derecho in 2022 that blew down church steeples, ripped off barn roofs and damaged homes, this government did not offer Ottawa

residents that same level of assistance. Many farmers are still reeling from that abandonment.

Now that the flood waters are slowly but surely starting to recede and, apparently, the disaster team from the province is in Ottawa, will this government ensure that affected homeowners in the national capital can apply for disaster assistance relief this time?

Hon. Steve Clark: According to the member’s own municipal staff, the majority of the permanent homes located in the flood plains appear to have insurance that would cover any losses they receive.

I want to remind all members that the Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians program is not to replace insurance; it’s a program that provides the minimum basic requirements as part of it. The member knows that.

As I said, a meeting is scheduled with the ministry and the municipality tomorrow.

Media reports to date suggest that it’s approximately 130 properties that may be impacted, largely in the West Carleton–March ward, which includes the Constance Bay area. This is something we’re going to continue to monitor. I want to assure the member that ministry officials have boots on the ground.

SKILLED TRADES

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: My question is for the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.

Ontario is currently facing a historic shortage of skilled workers across nearly every trade. Simply put, Ontario needs more workers. The numbers are staggering: It’s projected that 72,000 workers will be needed by 2027 in the construction sector alone. However, with so many unfilled jobs, it’s concerning that the average age of an apprentice is 29 years old. Young people need to be provided with the opportunities to launch into these well-paying and life-long careers.

Speaker, through you: Can the minister please explain how our government is supporting young people in gaining the skills they need to address our province’s overwhelming demand for skilled tradespeople?

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I want to thank the member from Carleton for being such a champion of those in the skilled trades. I remember being with the member and the local ironworkers at the ironworkers’ training centre in her riding and meeting two young female apprentices who really advocated for the government to improve washrooms and improve PPE for women. So I want to thank the member again.

Speaker, as the Premier and I often say, a career in the skilled trades is truly a career for life. That is why our government is investing more than \$1.5 billion over the next several years to get more young people into the trades.

Today, I am pleased to be joined by Serjenka Paul, Malik D’Cruz, Alden Patterson and Abraham Belisario, who are starting their careers in the skilled trades thanks to the innovative and game-changing future builders scholarship, powered by Scottie Barnes, in partnership with the Skilled Trades College of Canada.

Working with community leaders and role models like Scottie Barnes, we're going to continue to get more people into the skilled trades.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Thank you to the minister.

Mr. Speaker, when speaking about getting more people into the skilled trades and how the labour shortage is hurting Ontario's economic potential—we need to remove barriers for those who don't currently have jobs but who want to work. Most people who are unemployed or receiving social assistance want to work.

Currently, there are nearly 700,000 people in Ontario who are on social assistance, many of whom are seeking employment. However, some of these individuals may need assistance with retraining and other supports so that their skills better match the jobs of today.

Our government must focus on implementing programs that provide practical help for individuals to secure a fulfilling career to support themselves and their families.

Through you, Mr. Speaker: Can the minister please explain how our government is supporting Ontarians in securing gainful work?

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I want to thank the member again for that question.

This is why we're changing our Employment Ontario system for those on social assistance, to ensure we're now buying workboots, we're buying uniforms, we're buying transit passes. We're sitting with those on social assistance to ensure they're writing résumés properly and they know how to enter interviews, to ensure they can get meaningful employment. We've made a lot of changes to Employment Ontario throughout the province. In the three regions where we brought forward these changes, I'm proud to announce to the House today that 63,000 people have now gained meaningful employment, filling labour shortages—but most importantly, ensuring that people are providing more income, so they can build families, beyond these careers.

We're going to continue working every single day for those on social assistance by lifting them up and removing barriers to get into in-demand careers.

ROAD SAFETY

Ms. Doly Begum: Last week, we heard of a massive tragedy, where an eight-year-old girl died after a hit-and-run outside a school in Burlington, Ontario. The girl was trying to cross the driveway to get to the school's entrance when she was hit by a car leaving the parking lot.

The issue of pedestrian fatalities and severe injuries has become a growing concern for residents and communities, with 22 deaths and 77 severe injuries reported in Toronto in 2022 alone. The lack of meaningful action in Ontario to ensure safe streets for all is concerning. We here in this House need to do much more.

My question to the Premier is, what action will this government take to prevent these fatal pedestrian accidents?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I thank the member opposite for her important question.

Since we were elected in 2018, road safety has been a top priority for our government. I just want to underline the fact that road safety is not a partisan issue. Our government has worked closely with members of the opposition caucus on these important measures because we want to do everything we can to protect our vulnerable road users.

Since September 2018, we've implemented important changes that will protect vulnerable road users. We've increased penalties for drivers who fail to yield for pedestrians at crosswalks, at crossovers and at school crossings. We've increased the maximum fine penalty for all general offences under the Highway Traffic Act.

And we've introduced a new offence for careless driving causing death or bodily harm, with penalties that include fines, licence suspensions and imprisonment. This offence carries the longest prison term of any penalty in the Highway Traffic Act.

But this is not a one-and-done issue. It's an ongoing priority, and we're going to continue to work with Ontarians—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. The supplementary question.

Ms. Doly Begum: I agree with the minister on one thing: Road safety is not a partisan issue.

We have also introduced a solution: Bill 40, the Moving Ontarians Safely Act, which will enshrine measures to prevent more lives from being impacted by unsafe roads.

I think of my friend right here, the member from St. Catharines, whose mother was hit by a driver on March 24 as she crossed a street in front of another elementary school. She was knocked nine feet into the air and hurled for 20 feet. She's still in hospital.

Will this government commit to making our roads safer by passing this bill?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Any form of aggressive and distracted driving is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated by this government.

Our government introduced community safety zones around schools for this specific issue, to make sure that drivers take extra care when they are driving around our most vulnerable, our children. We have allowed municipalities to introduce this around schools, and we're doing everything we can to support community safety zone implementation across Ontario. We understand that in 2021 alone, over 250,000 tickets were issued to vehicles that were captured by speed cameras that were noticing speeding in these community safety zones.

We're going to continue to support our municipalities as they take the measures that they can to protect vulnerable road users, especially around schools, and we're going to continue to do what we can to make sure that our roads are among the safest anywhere in North America.

1120

NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Ric Bresee: My question is for the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development.

For so long under the previous Liberal government, so many opportunities to foster economic growth across northern Ontario were lost or ignored. The strengths, the assets and the abilities found in so many of our rural, remote and Indigenous communities were ignored. As a result, their full potential has never been realized.

Our government must respect the people of northern Ontario, and we must implement solutions that will allow all Ontarians to have more opportunities to create and expand their economic potential. Our government must continue to invest in programs and projects that will help keep northern Ontario competitive and current.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is supporting prosperity and opportunities in northern Ontario?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I'm going to try, but first I want to thank the member from Hastings–Lennox and Addington for his amazing job and the important contributions he makes to our caucus.

It's that time of year. Spring is finally here across northern Ontario. Leaders from across our vast region meet for an opportunity to discuss best practices every year—especially for the past five, under the leadership of this Premier, and the commitment from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, to join municipal leaders and talk about the opportunities across northern Ontario. That was in full display in Thunder Bay. What a lineup: Ministers Surma, Clark, Dunlop, Lecce, Pirie, Smith, and, of course, what I fondly like to call the minister for Thunder Bay, our amazing parliamentary assistant, Kevin Holland. We made a direct pitch to the importance of business expansion and development—179 job placements, to the tune of \$7.8 million. We're on fire—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. The supplementary question.

Mr. Ric Bresee: I think I just heard \$7.5 million.

It's encouraging that our government is supporting common sense measures that will continue to build prosperity across northern Ontario. Many communities across the north are eager to take advantage of these opportunities that will help create jobs and expand business operations.

Our government must continue to work with our northern partners to build a stronger Ontario. The people across the north are counting on our government to deliver on our commitment to invest in key priorities that are relevant and important to their communities.

Can the minister please expand on how our government is continuing to invest in projects that will strengthen communities in northern Ontario?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Enough about northwestern Ontario; let me shift to northeastern Ontario, where yesterday I and my colleagues helped to kick off FONOM, the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities conference—a phenomenal agenda. There we were again—several

cabinet ministers making important announcements about what's going on in northeastern Ontario.

I made a bit of a pivot. There are so many beautiful small towns up there in northeastern Ontario, and they appreciate our community development tranche that we put into the NOHFC when we modernized it, to the tune of \$5 million. We talked about Blind River and rehabilitating their curling club; the township of St. Joseph and rehabilitating a children's library; Gore Bay and upgrading the harbourfront and making it more accessible. These are the things that matter to young families and retirees in our community—good, hard-working families who want a great quality of life. We remain committed to just that.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Paul, a tenant in my riding, was saved from homelessness thanks to the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit. This subsidy was supposed to last until spring 2024, but after the government slashed funds to this program, the funds are now set to run out by the end of the month in Toronto.

Will this government properly fund this program to keep individuals and families from ending up on the streets?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: I can't believe some of the lines of questioning we get from the New Democratic Party, given the fact that we've increased our Homelessness Prevention Program by \$202 million—and in the city of Toronto, by an additional \$48 million. We continue to work with our service managers, and we continue to work with the federal government.

It's interesting that this member asks a question about a cost-shared program under the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit, as part of the National Housing Strategy. This member and his party refused to stand up for tenants and citizens in asking for our fair share of federal dollars. We're being shortchanged \$490 million by the federal government, and the NDP continue to sit on their hands.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Aside from the very fascinating spin we just heard now, the government has responded to this in the media and simply blamed the cost of skyrocketing rents.

The government must take responsibility for the out-of-control cost of rent right now. There is an immediate solution, and it's called rent control. Tenants don't have time to wait for a market adjustment. They need relief right now.

Will this government support the NDP's call to bring back rent control right now?

Hon. Steve Clark: Two days in a row, and the NDP continue to talk about failed policies.

Again, we put a plan in place that has seen, in the last two years, a record amount of purpose-built rental construction in our province, something that every community,

no matter what corner of the province you're in—we need more purpose-built rentals. What have we seen? Last year, 15,000 new purpose-built rental starts, and the year before, over 13,000—the highest we've seen since the mid-1980s. Again, we continue to work with our municipal partners, we continue to put a plan in place.

I want to remind this member—the NDP have sort of amnesia when they come to the House. Here's a party that continues to vote against all of the housing support that we give. They want high fees, high taxes on our non-profits and our affordable housing—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. The next question.

SKILLED TRADES

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: My question is for the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Ontario's labour shortage is at a crisis point, particularly in the skilled trades. The impact that the shortage of workers is having on our province is reflected in the number of job vacancies, as well as in the supply chain challenges and higher prices for services.

We know that building a stronger Ontario where people and businesses can thrive starts with our youth. By strengthening and investing in our skilled trades and apprenticeship system, we can ensure that Ontario's younger generation will be best prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Can the minister please explain what our government is doing to increase the number of skilled trade workers?

Hon. Jill Dunlop: Thank you to the member for that great question.

Growing up in a family of plumbers, I witnessed firsthand the importance of tradespeople and the value that they contribute to the local community.

Our government is committed to addressing labour shortages head-on, and that starts with post-secondary education. That is why we continue to advocate and promote our Ontario colleges' skilled trades and apprenticeship programs across the province. To further enhance opportunities for college students to enter the workforce with job-ready skills, our government expanded the degrees that colleges can offer to now include new, three-year degrees and more four-year degrees in applied areas of study. Our government also invested \$60 million of funding to support Ontario's first micro-credentials strategy and expanded OSAP to ensure that they are eligible, to help workers retain and upgrade their skills.

As Ontario faces a growing labour shortage in the skilled trades, we are making the necessary adjustments for students to enter skilled trades programs, because when you have a job in the trades, you have a reliable career for life.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question?

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Thank you to the minister for that response—\$60 million for micro-credentialling is amazing.

While it's great to hear how our government is prioritizing the skilled trades, it's important to recognize that opportunities have not been equal for all Ontarians who are interested in this sector. The stigma that has developed around being a tradesperson remains a barrier that many individuals, particularly young women, have encountered in trying to pursue a career in this field. In 2021, women represented less than 4% of workers in automotive and construction skilled trades.

Our government must address the ongoing labour shortage across our province by recognizing and supporting the vital role that women have in building a stronger Ontario.

1130

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is creating better conditions for women to enter and succeed in the trades?

Hon. Jill Dunlop: The member is absolutely right; for years, we have seen a real stigma around having a career in the trades, especially directed towards women. This has to end. Not only are trades a great way to get into an in-demand and high-paying career, but trades are essential to ensuring Ontario's future economic prosperity.

Having grown up in skilled trades family, I know firsthand that the best way to get someone interested in the trades is to expose them to it at a young age.

That is why I was proud to attend the Jill of All Trades event at Centennial College last year and to see all of the young women who attend similar events across the province. This is a one-day event at various college campuses, where high school girls are able to experience rewarding career options in the trades, and it teaches them that the trades are an option for them.

Speaker, it is projected that one in five new job openings in Ontario are likely to be in skilled trades occupations by 2025.

I'm proud that our government will continue to give women and all learners flexible—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. The next question?

ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

M. Guy Bourgouin: Le système scolaire en Ontario est en pénurie de personnel enseignant. La réussite et la qualité de l'éducation dépend des enseignants qualifiés. Comment peut-on assurer un succès académique en langue française quand on fait face aux facteurs suivants : une augmentation de 450 % des lettres de permission d'enseignants non qualifiés, les conseils qui sont forcés à puiser dans leurs réserves pour couvrir les dépenses reliées à la pandémie, et aucune institution postsecondaire qui offre la formation en enseignements dans le nord de l'Ontario depuis 2021, suite à la situation de l'Université Laurentienne?

Ma question est pour le premier ministre. Le besoin est maintenant. Quand allez-vous mettre sur pied les 37 recommandations du comité, tel que promis en 2021?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Education.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I will just, first off, note that we brought forth legislation to this House, the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, and in that bill, responding to the concerns cited by the members opposite, we have required the Ontario College of Teachers to certify educators from the Francophonie, for example, by at least 50% faster. We are requiring better processing times at the college; one of the principle concerns are French-language-education stakeholders. In addition to that, we are requiring new educators to be better trained on literacy, on math, on special education, on leadership and on literacy promotion. If the members opposite want to work with Government on this, they will vote for that bill. We just brought forth a budget—a commitment to hire 2,000 more teachers to benefit our public, our Catholic, our English and French school systems.

But those measures, those investments, that additional staff have been opposed systematically by the NDP.

I really do hope, in good faith, you will vote for this bill so we can work together to resolve the long-standing national issue of a French-teacher shortage in this country.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

M. Guy Bourgouin: C'est encore drôle que le ministre croit ce qu'il dit, parce qu'il y a l'ACÉPO, l'AFO puis les conseils catholiques qui vous disent que votre programme ne fonctionne pas, que votre projet de loi met en péril nos droits constitutionnels.

À la suite d'une annonce en juin 2021, le gouvernement était censé d'agir immédiatement sur une stratégie suite aux recommandations proposés par le comité d'experts—exactement les personnes que j'ai nommées, les associations que j'ai nommées—visant à remédier à la pénurie de personnel en langue française.

Deux ans plus tard aucune action n'a été mise sur pied, et le comité attend toujours l'implémentation de leurs recommandations.

Alors, monsieur le Président, je redemande la même question. Quand est-ce que ce gouvernement va mettre en action les recommandations données par le comité d'experts pour mettre fin à cette pénurie et assurer la continuité et l'équité de nos écoles en langue française?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Mr. Speaker, it was our government that brought together unions, school boards and the French-language community, in conjunction with the Minister of Francophone Affairs, for the first time to resolve an issue that preceded our government—it's a long-standing national issue of access to French-language educators. We responded with a \$13-million investment and a commitment to attract the best and brightest teachers from the broader Francophonie community, and we're seeing the results in Ontario schools today. We literally have new teachers attracted as a consequence of that action and that investment.

We understand the need to continue to work together and resolve this issue. We brought forth legislation designed to certify those teachers faster. We brought forth a plan to better train them and support them. In addition, we have a plan to help hire over 350 certified French-language educators. We've increased the budget for French-language education to the highest levels ever in Ontario history.

We'll continue to invest and work together to help French students succeed.

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Minister of Education.

Today, my son is working in a trade. He's 18 years old, and he's learning how to be an electrician. That's so exciting to me.

But Ontario continues to experience the largest labour shortage in a generation. There is a tremendous need for skilled trade workers across Ontario, including in my communities in Brantford–Brant.

Unfortunately, for 15 years, the previous Liberal government ignored the importance of equipping students for the jobs of the future. As a result, Ontario has seen a decline in the completion of apprenticeship certification and trades diplomas. That is why our government must do all that we can to encourage students who are interested in pursuing a career in this vital industry.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is empowering students with early exposure to technology and the skilled trades?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Thank you very much to the member from Brantford–Brant for this question and for his passion on this issue.

We are working together to make sure that we have a talented next generation of young people prepared to enter the skilled trades, to get good jobs and create good lives and opportunities for themselves.

It's why we followed the advice of skilled trade professionals, for the first time, in the legislation before the House, to allow more mid-career certified professionals who work in the skilled trades space to work within our schools to leverage that experience that you just can't duplicate in an academic space. We need these hands-on workers. We're doing that in the bill. We're allowing new skilled trade graduation coaches for the first time—leveraging people in the private sector and in the trenches working to build this country and this province—to work with kids to give them meaningful pathways to employment and to professional development.

We also, most recently, required every student in Ontario to take at least one technological education course—for the third of girls who take that course—creating pathways for all of them to succeed.

We know this is going to make a difference to build the economy of the future.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Will Bouma: It's great to see that our government continues to make progress in helping students gain the skills necessary for rewarding careers.

In fact, it was about a year ago that the minister came to Brantford—Brant and we announced a new Catholic high school. I'm working with the Catholic board to make sure that's a trades-focused high school. But we need to do more.

In my riding of Brantford—Brant, Patriot Forge is a leading employer that needs more skilled trade workers so they can meet their growing demands, expand operations and provide financial opportunities to their employees. It is outstanding companies like Patriot Forge that are helping Ontario remain competitive and further our economic prosperity. Their success as a local business and our success as a province depend on a highly skilled workforce. This starts with students getting interested in the skilled trades from a young age.

Speaker, can the minister please elaborate on the actions our government is taking to ensure that employers in Ontario can attract and retain the workers that they need to succeed and thrive?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: In the House today, we have Beaverworx, the FRC team 2609 with us today. Congratulations. These amazing young people are part of the winning alliance to win the first robotics world championship in Texas, and I will note, they were the only Canadian team to compete. It is that type of excellence in this province we want to harness, and we want to make sure more students succeed.

In the new curriculum in math, students now, as a requirement, learn how to build a robot. Every grade, starting in grade 1, is required to learn how to code the robot. We are giving young people a competitive advantage.

When you compare Ontario to the rest of this country, we're leading, and we're investing with a modern curriculum relevant to the job market, giving young people the life and the job skills they need to succeed. We're going to continue to increase investment—over 690 million more dollars—continue to modernize the curriculum and continue to stand up for these young people to have success in our economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The time for question period has expired.

RECEPTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): A couple of members have informed me that they have points of order.

I recognize the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services first.

Hon. Michael Parsa: Speaker, I'd like to invite all members and guests to tonight's reception hosted by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada. I want to specifically thank CEO Nicole Bonnie and CEO Valerie McMurtry. Their reception starts at 5:30 in room 228. I hope everyone joins us.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On a point of order, the member for Scarborough Southwest.

Ms. Doly Begum: I hope everyone will join me in welcoming more community members from Scarborough here with us today: Fazela Wedemire, Kareem Wedemire, Neallos Wedemire, Jayden Wedemire, and Amreek Wedemire.

Welcome to your House.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business this morning, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1141 to 1500.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs on the estimates selected by the standing committee for consideration.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim): Mr. Hardeman from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs presents the committee's report as follows:

Pursuant to standing order 63, your committee has selected the 2023-24 estimates of the following ministries and offices for consideration: Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development; Treasury Board Secretariat; Office of the Premier; Cabinet Office.

Report presented.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended: Bill 75, An Act to enact the Queen's Park Restoration Secretariat Act, 2023, and to make certain amendments to the Legislative Assembly Act and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL
POLICY

M^{me} France Gélinas: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy on the estimates selected by the standing committee for consideration.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim): Députée Gélinas from the Standing Committee on Social Policy presents the committee's report as follows:

Pursuant to standing order 63, your committee has selected the 2023-24 estimates of the following ministries for consideration: Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services; Ministry of Long-Term Care; Ministry of Colleges and Universities; Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

Report presented.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BETTER ENFORCEMENT
OF THE TOBACCO TAX ACT, 2023
LOI DE 2023 POUR UNE MEILLEURE
APPLICATION DE LA TAXE
SUR LE TABAC

Madame Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 106, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act to authorize police officers to undertake certain enforcement actions / Projet de loi 106, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac afin d'autoriser les agents de police à exercer certaines activités d'exécution.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Would the member care to explain her bill?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes, thank you. Currently, under the Tobacco Tax Act, certain enforcement activities are carried out by persons authorized by the Minister of Finance. The bill amends the act to deem police officers to be authorized by the Minister of Finance to carry out those enforcement activities or to otherwise authorize them to do so.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Paul Calandra: It's a motion that the Standing Committee on the Interior be authorized to meet on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 3:30 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Mr. Calandra has moved a motion that the Standing Committee on the Interior be authorized to meet on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. Agreed? Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have 2,571 names on this petition. I would like to thank Rosalyn Steen from Skead in my riding especially. The petition reads as follows:

"Petition for Better Staffing, Better Wages and Better Care in Ontario's Public Hospitals.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario,

"Whereas registered nurses and health care professionals are the backbone of Ontario's public health care system; and

"Whereas nurses and health care professionals are fighting for better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario's public hospitals; and

"Whereas the government has the power to direct the funding and priorities for the Ontario Hospital Association in this bargaining process;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"Support nurses and health care professionals represented by the Ontario Nurses' Association in their collective bargaining with the Ontario Hospital Association ... by demanding the OHA reach a negotiated agreement with nurses that results in better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario's public hospitals."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Maya to bring it to the Clerk.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I have a petition here signed by Donna Vanden Hoven. She has signed the petition.

"Health Care: Not for Sale.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: ...

"Whereas the Ford government wants to privatize our health care system;

"Whereas privatization will bleed nurses, doctors and PSWs out of our public hospitals and will download costs to patients;"

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately stop all plans to privatize Ontario's health care system, and fix the crisis in health care by:

"—repealing Bill 124 to help recruit, retain, return and respect health care workers with better pay and better working conditions;

"—licensing tens of thousands of internationally educated nurses and other health care professionals already in Ontario;

"—incentivizing health care professionals to choose to live and work in northern Ontario."

I fully support this petition, sign it and ask page Frederick to deliver it to the table.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I have a few hundred petitions from Dr. Sally Palmer.

“To Raise Social Assistance Rates.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s social assistance rates are well below Canada’s official Market Basket Measure poverty line and far from adequate to cover the rising costs of food and rent: \$733 for ... OW and \$1,227 for ODSP;

“Whereas an open letter to the Premier and two cabinet ministers, signed by over 230 organizations, recommends that social assistance rates be doubled for both Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP);

“Whereas the recent budget increase” last fall “of 5% for ODSP, with nothing for OW, could be experienced as an insult to recipients, who have been living since 2018 with frozen social assistance rates and a Canadian inflation rate that reached 12%;

“Whereas the government of Canada recognized in its CERB program that a ‘basic income’ of \$2,000 per month was the standard support required by individuals who lost their employment during the pandemic;”

“We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly to double social assistance rates for OW and ODSP.”

I fully support this petition, will sign it and ask page Nicholas to bring it to the table.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Miss Monique Taylor: I’m pleased to introduce these petitions that are signed from people in my riding of Hamilton Mountain.

“Petition for Better Staffing, Better Wages and Better Care in Ontario’s Public Hospitals.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario,

“Whereas registered nurses and health care professionals are the backbone of Ontario’s public health care system; and

“Whereas nurses and health care professionals are fighting for better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario’s public hospitals; and

“Whereas the government has the power to direct the funding and priorities for the Ontario Hospital Association in this bargaining process;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Support nurses and health care professionals represented by the Ontario Nurses’ Association in their collective bargaining with the Ontario Hospital Association ... by demanding the OHA reach a negotiated agreement with nurses that results in better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario’s public hospitals.”

I wholeheartedly support this petition, will affix my name to it and give it to page Randall to bring to the Clerk.

1510

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I have a petition entitled “Petition for Better Staffing, Better Wages and Better Care in

Ontario’s Public Hospitals,” and it’s signed by many, many of the residents in my riding of Ancaster and Dundas.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas registered nurses and health care professionals are the backbone of Ontario’s public health care system; and

“Whereas nurses and health care professionals are fighting for better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario’s public hospitals; and

“Whereas the government has the power to direct the funding and priorities for the Ontario Hospital Association in this bargaining process;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Support nurses and health care professionals represented by the Ontario Nurses’ Association in their collective bargaining with the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) by demanding the OHA reach a negotiated agreement with nurses that results in better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario’s public hospitals.”

I’m going to add my name to those of the people in my riding, and I’m going to give it to page Mridul to take to the table.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I have a whole whack of petitions here sent in by folks around Oshawa and Scarborough-Barrie, but I’ll say thank to the Ancheta family for signing this “Petition for Better Staffing, Better Wages and Better Care in Ontario’s Public Hospitals.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas registered nurses and health care professionals are the backbone of Ontario’s public health care system; and

“Whereas nurses and health care professionals are fighting for better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario’s public hospitals; and

“Whereas the government has the power to direct the funding and priorities for the Ontario Hospital Association in this bargaining process;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Support nurses and health care professionals represented by the Ontario Nurses’ Association in their collective bargaining with the Ontario Hospital Association ... by demanding the OHA reach a negotiated agreement with nurses that results in better staffing, better wages and better care in Ontario’s public hospitals.”

Of course I support this petition wholeheartedly, will affix my signature and send it to the table with page Dominic.

OPP DETACHMENT

M^{me} France Gélinas: I continue to receive hundreds and hundreds of petitions. I’d like to thank Hariette and Joe Reynolds from Alban in my riding for these petitions.

“Keep the Noëlville OPP Detachment Open

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas insufficient communications and consultations have taken place with communities and relevant stakeholders concerning the OPP Noëlville detachment’s continuing operations; and

“Whereas the residents and visitors in the municipalities of French River, Markstay-Warren, St.-Charles, Killarney and Britt-Byng Inlet as well as the First Nations of Dokis and Henvey Inlet deserve equitable access to a reliable, timely and efficient police response;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows: “to direct the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ontario Provincial Police to continue having Ontario Provincial Police officers reporting to an operational detachment location in Noëlville.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Kate to bring it to the Clerk.

SUBVENTIONS POUR LES ARTS ET LA CULTURE

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’aimerais remercier Carmen Portelance de Dowling dans mon comté pour ces pétitions.

« Investir dans les arts et la culture de l’Ontario.

« À l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« Alors que le secteur des arts et de la culture contribue 28,7 milliards de dollars au PIB de l’Ontario et crée plus de 300 000 emplois; et

« Alors que le budget du Conseil des arts n’a pas été augmenté au taux d’inflation de l’Ontario, ce qui exacerbe la précarité du revenu des artistes et des travailleurs culturels, dont certains gagnent moins de 25 000 \$ par année, et encore moins pour ceux qui appartiennent à des groupes méritant l’équité; et

« Alors que la précarité des revenus a été aggravée pendant la pandémie par des problèmes d’injustice réglementaire dans le secteur des arts et de la culture, ce qui a eu un impact disproportionné sur le secteur des arts de la scène et sur les groupes prioritaires déterminés par le CAO, notamment les artistes et travailleurs culturels BIPOC, autochtones, femmes, personnes handicapées et LGBTQIA2S+; »

Ils et elles demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario « de maintenir le budget de 65 millions de dollars du Conseil des arts de l’Ontario dans le budget provincial ... et d’investir adéquatement dans le secteur des arts et de la culture, notamment en soutenant les groupes qui méritent l’équité, les petits et moyens collectifs dans nos communautés, ainsi que les artistes individuels afin d’assurer leur survie personnelle et économique. »

J’appuie cette pétition, madame la Présidente. Je vais la signer et je la donne à Kate pour l’amener à la table des greffiers.

ORGAN DONATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Anne Fenson from Hanmer in my riding for these petitions.

“Saving Organs to Save Lives....

“Whereas there are currently 1,600 people waiting for a life-saving organ transplant in Ontario;

“Whereas every three days someone in Ontario dies because they can’t get a transplant in time;

“Whereas donating organs and tissues can save up to eight lives and improve the lives of up to 75 people;

“Whereas 90% of Ontarians support organ donation, but only 36%” of us “are registered;

“Whereas Nova Scotia has seen increases in organs and tissue for transplant after implementing a presumed consent legislation in January 2020;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Change the legislation to allow a donor system based on presumed consent as set out in ... Peter Kormos Memorial Act....”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and again ask my very patient page Kate to bring it to the Clerk.

ANTI-VAPING INITIATIVES FOR YOUTH

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Laurie Larose from Capreol in my riding for these petitions.

“Protect Kids from Vaping....

“Whereas very little is known about the long-term effects of vaping on youth; and

“Whereas aggressive marketing of vaping products by the tobacco industry is causing more and more kids to become addicted to nicotine through the use of e-cigarettes; and

“Whereas the hard lessons learned about the health impacts of smoking, should not be repeated with vaping, and the precautionary principle must be applied to protect youth from vaping; and

“Whereas many health agencies and Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada” and others “fully endorse the concrete proposals aimed at reducing youth vaping included in” my bill;

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario ...

“To call on the Ford government to immediately pass” the bill, “Vaping is not for Kids Act, in order to protect the health of Ontario’s youth.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Kate to bring it to the Clerk.

LABOUR LEGISLATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Monique Paquette from Hanmer in my riding for these petitions.

“Enact Anti-Scab Labour Law....

“Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: on average, 97% of collective agreements are negotiated without work disruption; and

“Whereas anti-replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978, in British Columbia since 1993, and

in Ontario under the NDP government, it was repealed by the Harris conservative government;

“Whereas anti-scab legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

“Whereas the use of scab labour during a strike or lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short and long term, as well as, the well-being of its residents;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly ... as follows:

“To pass the anti-scab labour bill to ban the use of replacement workers during a strike or lockout.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Kate to bring it to the Clerk.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Monique Paquette in my riding for these petitions.

“MS Specialized Clinic in Sudbury....

“Whereas northeastern Ontario has one of the highest rates of multiple sclerosis (MS) in Ontario;

“Whereas specialized MS clinics provide essential health care services to those living with multiple sclerosis, their caregiver and their family;

“Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is recognized as a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Immediately set up a ... MS clinic in the Sudbury area that is staffed by a neurologist who specializes in the treatment of multiple sclerosis, a physiotherapist and a social worker at a minimum.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Kate to bring it to the Clerk.

1520

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING MORE MINES ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023 VISANT L'AMÉNAGEMENT DE DAVANTAGE DE MINES

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 9, 2023, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 71, An Act to amend the Mining Act / Projet de loi 71, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les mines.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I rise to speak to third reading of Bill 71. I want to begin by saying the climate crisis is here: people in Alberta right now, the tragic wildfires they're facing, the flooding we're seeing once again in the Ottawa Valley, and so many other ways around the world. We know that mining is going to play a critical role as we electrify transportation, ramp up renewable energy and electrify home heating.

For over a decade now, I've been calling for a mining-to-manufacturing strategy to be able to make Ontario a leader in the new climate economy. We're playing catch-up now. Other jurisdictions are ahead of us. We're finally starting to see some investment in electric vehicles, and that's absolutely welcome. We are going to have to mine the minerals that are going to be a part of those supply chains, but we're going to need to do it right.

I voted in favour of this bill at second reading, hoping it would go to committee and be amended in some ways that address some, I think, important concerns that people have brought forward, one of which is defining what a qualified person is in addressing potential conflicts of interest in approving closure plans for mines. That would be a way to expedite the mining approval process while addressing legitimate concerns people have around the independence of oversight of mine closures.

I also talked about the need to make mine rehabilitation—to leave it better than it was in the past, which just seems to only make sense. When I go camping with my daughter every summer. I always say, “We've got to clean this campsite up and leave it better than we found it.” I think we can ask mining companies to do the same. Unfortunately, those amendments were voted down by the government.

But I think the issue that concerns me the most about where this bill sits right now is the concerns that have been raised by Indigenous leaders. The Matawa Chiefs Council has said that they believe this bill is exploitive and aggressive and runs contrary to the principles of reconciliation and the spirit of Treaty 9. The Chiefs of Ontario support them.

I would like to reach out to the government members, in the very limited time I have, in the interests of non-partisanship, and say: I want more mining in the north. I want that mining to be done faster, but it also has to be done within the spirit of reconciliation, where we have free, informed and prior consent from Indigenous nations. I believe the government should address that before moving forward with the bill.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll move to questions.

Mr. Will Bouma: It's so good to hear the support from the member from Guelph on this bill. I've had those conversations with him for the last few years on how critical it is to expand the battery and electric vehicle market in Ontario and the necessity of the resources that we can source from Ontario for these.

I'm curious, though, and this is something that I think is a province-wide issue: When we're having those conversations and discussions with Indigenous territories that are directly impacted by this, how far out should that net go? Is it just any Indigenous territory in the province of Ontario? Is it just directly those whose traditional lands are in that area?

I was just wondering if the member had any advice for us on exactly what that consultation should look like within that spirit of reconciliation.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: First of all, in the aspect of this bill, every First Nation impacted by the Ring of Fire and

the infrastructure going to the Ring of Fire should have free, informed and prior consent as part of the reconciliation process. Many Indigenous leaders have made it clear that if the government doesn't engage in respectful consultation, they're going to oppose these developments and likely delay mining in the Ring of Fire. That's why I'm asking the government to really consider taking the time to do this right, because we want mining in the north, but we want to do it right and we want to do it in a way that respects Indigenous rights.

From a broader perspective, I would say one of the things I've learned in this House over the past five years of being an MPP is that I think the province needs a consultation framework for how Indigenous consultation is going to work in this province, because in the absence of that, there's a lot of confusion around what is meaningful consultation.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Mr. John Vanthof: In response to the remarks from the member from Guelph, one of the things that we heard during the committee hearings, both from Indigenous leaders and from the Ontario Mining Association, was that there's a lack of a framework for not only consultation but how decisions are made. What we found probably most disappointing was that the government decided not to adopt motions to create that framework—so actually make a solid platform between governments, because now, often, it's left up to mining companies, and they don't want that either.

Could you comment on that?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: So I went to Timmins and Sudbury as part of the committee hearings, and we did hear from mining companies that are doing and are committed to consultation with Indigenous nations. One of the frustrations that we heard from some folks in the mining sector as well as from Indigenous leaders was the lack of a clear framework, which is something that—I'm not going to put that all on this government, because we haven't had one in Ontario, period, so a lot of governments wear this. But here's an opportunity to solve this, to create a framework, because I believe we do want to expedite mining in the north. I want this province to be a leader of the new climate economy. But we also have to make sure we do it in way that respects Indigenous rights. That's why having a framework will both benefit the mining industry and our economy and the jobs that are going to come from that, and will benefit reconciliation as we repair relationships with Indigenous peoples.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): One last question.

Mr. Will Bouma: As the member is probably aware, the elected chief in the territory of the Six Nations of the Grand River has called for those consultations to be, in our area, just through the elected council, as that helps the system work better. Obviously there are other groups on the territory in my riding that compete for that. I was wondering if the member would feel that anyone who says that they should be consulted should be consulted, or should that be limited?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I really appreciate the question from the member, because I was actually just at Six Nations recently, meeting with the band council. It was once again during those meetings I was reminded of how the lack of a framework creates confusion. In the case of Six Nations, there's confusion around who to consult: Is it Haudenosaunee chiefs, HDI, the elected band council? That highlighted for me the importance of having a framework in place that will define that.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to further debate. The member for Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, madame la Présidente. J'espère avoir assez de temps. La dernière fois, j'ai manqué de temps et vous étiez en chaise.

Premièrement, c'est toujours un plaisir de me lever puis de parler d'un projet de loi comme le projet de loi 71, pour bâtir des mines, et puis aussi représenter mes commettants de Mushkegowuk—Baie James.

Le NPD, on veut le développement. On veut que la province ait du succès. On veut du développement en province. Le monde se dirige vers une planète beaucoup plus verte, ce qui fait qu'on a besoin de ces minerais-là. Les riches en minerais de l'Ontario vont aider à diminuer notre dépendance de l'énergie fossile, mais aussi à créer des emplois. Ça aussi, c'est important.

1530

Les projets doivent être des exemples de sécurité, et respecter les règles de l'art en développement durable. Un des points les plus importants, et qui ne fait pas partie de ce projet de loi-là, c'est que les projets miniers doivent recevoir le consentement libre et clair des Premières Nations qui voient ces projets de développer sur leurs territoires ancestraux. Trop souvent, le gouvernement ne consulte pas assez. Puis je pense que—je vais en parler un petit peu plus tard dans mon allocution, mais on voit que ça aurait dû faire partie de ce projet de loi. Quand on parle de minerais, qu'on parle du Cercle de feu, ça va sans dire qu'on va sur les territoires ancestraux. Nous devons consulter puis aussi avoir le consentement.

Le gouvernement Ford a un historique connu d'affaiblir les protections de l'environnement et d'ignorer les droits des Premières Nations—une recette pour augmenter les conflits et les risques de retarder des projets miniers importants. On vient d'entendre, de la personne qui a fait son allocution avant moi, qu'on va voir que—tu sais, on veut développer, mais on ne veut pas consulter. On a eu neuf Premières Nations qui ont mis en demeure, qui ont décidé d'amener le gouvernement de l'Ontario en cour pour le manque de consultation, le manque de transparence, le manque de consentement sur leurs territoires ancestraux—neuf. Et dans ces neuf-là, il y en a quatre de ma communauté, mais je vais en parler un petit peu plus tard.

Ça n'aide pas à développer les projets, ça. Ce que le gouvernement propose va retarder parce qu'il va y avoir des injonctions, et ça va coûter plus cher aux compagnies, ça va coûter plus cher à la province, ça va nuire au processus. Je ne connais pas une Première Nation qui est

contre le développement économique. Moi, celles dont je parle, dans ma région, sont pour le développement économique, mais pas à tout prix, pas à mettre leurs territoires ancestraux—il peut peut-être y avoir un désastre environnemental. Elles veulent faire partie des décisions. Elles veulent faire certain qu'on protège l'état—on parle des « peat moss ». On parle d'une région qui est très, très vulnérable. C'est normal qu'elles veulent protéger leur région. Puis elles veulent la protéger parce qu'elles regardent tout le temps à sept générations, ce qui dit que, nous, ce qu'on a—on veut faire certain que nos familles, nos enfants, nos petits-enfants puissent continuer à faire de la chasse, de la pêche. Mais aussi, on veut que nos communautés vivent bien, mais pas à tout prix, pas à tout prix. Puis tu ne peux pas les blâmer, madame la Présidente, parce qu'elles se sont tellement fait brûler, tellement fait avoir avec des promesses.

Écoute, le Traité 9 est signé. Dans les 11 traités, le Traité 9 est un des seuls traités dont la province est signataire. Puis, on a les mêmes responsabilités que le fédéral. Fait que, à quelque part, de tout le temps jouer de la balle et dire : « Ah! c'est un problème fédéral »—je m'excuse, mais on est signataire et on doit respecter ce qu'on a signé. Puis ça, ça veut dire—les Premières Nations ont été très claires quand elles sont venues. Elles ont dit : « On n'a jamais concédé nos droits quand ça vient à nos territoires ancestraux. »

Nous avons l'obligation de réussir pour que l'Ontario continue d'être un leader mondial dans le développement minier durable. Oui, on a une obligation. Ce projet de loi a des lacunes—il y a certaines lacunes—et continue d'être problématique. Il ne répond même pas aux valeurs actuelles des compagnies minières. Les valeurs sont les protections environnementales, le respect des communautés des Premières Nations, ainsi qu'une collaboration entre nation et nation pour du consentement libre et clair. Les minières le disent, mais elles disent aussi que ce ne devrait pas être juste à elles de le faire; elles demandent un processus.

Notre demande au gouvernement est claire : il faut supporter les amendements que nous proposons—on vient de proposer, je pense qu'il y avait, 21 amendements; ils n'ont supporté aucun de nos amendements—puisque dans l'état actuel, le projet de loi est problématique. Je vais en mentionner à mesure qu'on y va, mais on voit que le consentement en est un, et aussi ce que les minières demandent.

Il y a une ironie dans le fait de consulter les communautés du Nord, mais pas celles directement concernées par le projet de loi 71. Je dis que c'est une ironie parce que quand ils ont fait des consultations à travers la province, le plus haut qu'ils sont allés au Nord, c'était Timmins puis Sudbury. Madame la Présidente, Sudbury et Timmins sont à 1 000 kilomètres du Cercle de feu, qui est près de Thunder Bay. Le Cercle de feu est beaucoup plus près de Thunder Bay.

Pourquoi est-ce qu'on a omis Thunder Bay ou des communautés qui sont plus proches, comme Sioux Lookout? Pourquoi est-ce qu'on a omis ces communautés-

là ? Il me semble qu'on parle du Cercle de feu, on parle du développement, on parle de tout l'impact économique qu'il va y avoir dans la région, mais on ne va pas dans la région qui va être beaucoup plus concernée ou beaucoup plus affectée, ces régions-là.

Quoi? Avaient-ils peur? Avaient-ils peur d'aller à Thunder Bay puis de la région? Avaient-ils peur des réponses qu'on pourrait avoir des personnes concernées? C'est sûr qu'il y aurait des « pour » et des « contre ». Mais ça aurait peut-être donné aux Premières Nations qui sont beaucoup plus près d'être capables de s'y rendre puis de témoigner pourquoi ce qu'ils demandent sont des amendements pour que ça puisse avancer.

Mais non, on ne va pas à Thunder Bay ou Sioux Lookout ou dans des régions où on parle du développement économique. On en parle tellement. On l'a vu dans le budget combien on a parlé du Cercle de feu et des minerais dont on a besoin. Mais quand c'est le temps de consulter, on ne va pas dans ce coin-là. Il ne faut pas aller direct dans ce coin-là, tout d'un coup que ce serait tout du négatif.

Le gouvernement conservateur s'en est réjoui à marteler son message voulant dire que le projet est une réussite économique, un « boost » pour les régions et aussi les véhicules électriques. Pourtant, en 2018, on se souvient, le gouvernement a retiré toutes les subventions puis a arraché les bornes électriques. Ça n'a pas été long. Je pense que, dans le premier mandat, c'est tout parti, ces affaires-là. Puis là, aujourd'hui, on se pète les bretelles qu'on va tout faire pour l'énergie verte. Mais on ne va pas consulter, par exemple, où les personnes sont très affectées.

De faire avancer des projets de minéraux critiques dans des résidus miniers en Ontario est une bonne chose. Il est important pour le futur de l'exploitation minière. Oui, c'est une bonne chose. Pourquoi? Ils les ont déjà sortis. Pourquoi ne pas donner l'opportunité de reprendre des minerais qui sont là qu'on peut exploiter puis qu'on peut développer, puis amener—qu'est-ce qu'on l'appelle en anglais?—du « second value ». Moi, je viens de l'industrie forestière : valeur ajoutée. Il y a des minerais qu'ils n'ont pas pu prendre, mais là, ils ont l'opportunité de les prendre. Ils les ont déjà sortis.

Par contre, il y a des normes environnementales connues et établies qui méritent de plus amples actions, comme le maintien du directeur de la réhabilitation des mines pour diriger ces projets. Fait que, on sait que dans les « tailings », comme ils disent, il faut qu'on pense que—on a vu beaucoup de désastres environnementaux. On sait que ça peut être vraiment critique pour la région. On a une obligation, et je pense que les directeurs sont là pour ça. Mais on parle de retirer les directeurs.

Dans toutes les consultations effectuées, aucun parti n'a demandé de retirer le directeur de la réhabilitation minière. Il n'en a pas un qui l'a demandé. Ce n'était pas ça qui a été demandé. Mais le gouvernement, dans sa sagesse, a décidé de retirer le directeur de réhabilitation, et il va donner le pouvoir au ministre.

C'est un gouvernement qui aime donner beaucoup de pouvoir à leurs ministres. On voit en éducation que le

ministre veut s'ingérer dans les conseils. On voit que le ministre—les « MZO ». On a vu tout ça. Puis on voit que le résultat est quoi? C'est que la province paye un prix cher pour ça. On voit encore que c'est la même situation.

Ça ne veut pas dire que le ministre n'est pas qualifié, mais on sait que les gouvernements changent, les ministres changent. Ça ne fait pas tout d'eux des experts. Je pense que c'est ça qu'il faut prendre en considération.

Fait que, les directeurs qui étaient là, il y a une raison pourquoi ils étaient là. Puis, honnêtement, le ministre devrait se garder une distance pour faire face à des projets comme ça. C'était pour ça que le directeur était là : pour mettre cette distance entre le ministre.

Pourquoi est-ce qu'on veut retirer dans la loi la mention du directeur de réhabilitation par le ministre? La question se pose. Les partis changent, comme j'ai dit, mais les directeurs, eux autres, ne changent pas. Ils sont encore là, et ils sont les experts. Parce que, en enlevant le directeur, on perd de l'expertise; on perd beaucoup d'expertise puis d'expérience. C'est ça qu'il faut prendre en considération. Est-ce qu'on a déjà pensé qu'il y a une raison pour que les directeurs soient là, soient en place? Est-ce qu'on a déjà pensé que c'est venu des désastres environnementaux du passé? Tu sais? Est-ce qu'on a pensé avant de dire qu'on va—parce que c'est un gouvernement qui veut enlever du « red tape ». « On en enlève, du “red tape”. Il faut expédier, expédier, expédier; faut que ça bouge; faut que ça avance. »

1540

Mais il y a un vieux dicton en français qu'on dit : « Vaux mieux prévenir que guérir. » Puis, quand arrive un désastre ou quand arrive une situation, ça coûte beaucoup plus cher et ça affecte beaucoup plus de personnes.

Ça, madame la Présidente, quand on pense aux Premières Nations, comment elles ont vécu—on n'a rien qu'à penser à Grassy Narrows. Ce n'était pas une minière; c'était une papetière, mais ils vivent encore de ça. C'est pour ça que le gouvernement a donné encore 10 ans d'extension pour protéger leur territoire. Mais on sait que les minières peuvent être problématiques, même si les minières ont fait beaucoup de chemin et que les minières ont—ce n'est plus ce que c'était avant.

Quand j'ai commencé mon allocution, tu sais, ils l'ont demandé, ce processus-là—ils n'ont pas demandé d'enlever le directeur. Ce n'est pas ça qu'ils ont demandé, pantoute. Mais le gouvernement, dans sa sagesse, a dit qu'on va enlever le directeur et qu'on va donner tout le pouvoir au ministre.

Ce projet de loi vient aussi toucher l'obligation des entreprises minières de démontrer un plan de financement pour assurer de remettre le terrain d'exploitation dans son état naturel. Avec ce projet de loi, on vient diluer la protection de remettre ces terrains à l'état naturel. Pourquoi? Parce que les minières pourraient poser un plan financier à stages avec l'approbation du ministre.

Avant, la loi disait que ça prend tout l'argent—l'argent, il faut qu'il soit là en « trust », pour que, s'il y arrive de quoi, la fermeture est garantie, que si la compagnie pour une raison quelconque n'a pas l'argent, l'argent est là pour

protéger—mais là, ça va aller par stage. Ça va aller par stage et ça va aller avec l'approbation du ministre.

Si la minière n'arrive pas à livrer un retour à l'état naturel ou que la minière fait banqueroute—on a vu des compagnies faire banqueroute—qui va payer? La question se pose. C'est qui? Probablement que c'est nous, les payeurs de taxes. Le projet de loi n'est pas clair à cet effet, mais il y a une affaire qui est sûre : s'ils font banqueroute puis que l'argent n'est pas tout là en « trust », parce qu'on parle de stages—parce que s'ils disent, « Bien, non, non, l'argent va être protégé », mais pourquoi avoir un stage? Ça ne fait pas de sens. On est aussi bien de garder tout l'argent en fiducie, en « trust », puis l'argent est là pour protéger; s'ils le font en stage, au moins on sait que l'argent est là. Fait que, ça ne fait pas de sens de le faire en stage. C'est pour ça que la question se pose. Parce que si on le fait par stage, disons qu'il faut commencer une étape, puis là ils font banqueroute, bien qui va payer? Probablement que c'est nous, si la protection n'est pas là, si l'argent n'est pas là.

Elles montrent l'exemple en termes de respect des normes de développer, parce que les minières aujourd'hui ont évolué énormément—puis ça, je le disais—dans les demandes environnementales. Elles montrent l'exemple en termes de respect des normes de développement durable et de consultation avec les communautés des Premières Nations. Le travail se fait. Mais ce n'est pas juste aux minières de le faire; c'est aussi au gouvernement.

Lors des consultations, elles ont demandé un processus qui était clair. Elles ont demandé un processus pour les tiers partis : minière, gouvernement, Premières Nations. Qu'est-ce qu'on trouve dans le projet de loi? Aucune mention d'un processus.

Pourtant, il y a neuf communautés autochtones qui sont venues ici. On a vu des chefs en haut se faire jeter en dehors de la Chambre pour avoir dit : « Pas de consultations, pas de Cercle de feu, pas de chemin du Cercle de feu. » Il me semble que le message est clair.

Là, on a un processus qu'ils viennent de mettre en place qui aurait pu aider. J'ai négocié pendant 22 ans. Les compagnies aiment des processus clairs. Les Premières Nations demandent un processus; elles veulent voir qu'elles doivent dire leur consentement. On avait la chance de peut-être insérer quelque chose qui aurait pu baisser le ton, aider au processus de ce que les Premières Nations viennent de faire—mettre une injonction contre le gouvernement, et dire : « Non, on vous emmène en cour. C'est bien de valeur. Il n'y a plus rien qui se passe sur nos territoires ancestraux. »

Là-dessus, il y a quatre de mes communautés—Attawapiskat, Fort Albany, Kashechewan puis Constance Lake. Ça, c'est juste dans mon comté; les autres viennent des comtés de mon collègue de Kiiwetinoong puis aussi de la députée de Thunder Bay—

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Superior North.

M. Guy Bourgoin: Superior North.

Fait que ces communautés-là qui font ça ont dit : « Assez, c'est assez. » Puis je peux vous dire qu'il y a beaucoup de communautés qui regardent ce qui se passe.

Va-t-il y en avoir d'autres qui vont se joindre? Peut-être. Mais le message est clair, parce qu'on voit qu'il y a une tendance à aller pour ça. Pourquoi? Parce que c'est un manque de respect, continuellement, contre les Premières Nations—continuellement. On signe des mémorandums d'entente. Je vous ai parlé d'Attawapiskat, qui a eu la De Beers. They're landlocked. Ils sont pris dans leur réserve. À cause qu'il y a un chemin qui se rend au quai et la mine a mis une dispute sur le chemin, ils ne peuvent pas agrandir. Le ministère s'est rangé sur le bord et a dit : « On ne peut pas vous donner l'accès aux terres ou au terrain parce qu'il y a une dispute sur le chemin. » Pourtant, le chemin existait avant que la mine n'existe, puis ils sont sur leurs territoires ancestraux.

Après ça on se demande pourquoi on a des injonctions et qu'on amène le gouvernement en cour. Bien, expliquez-moi, madame la Présidente, combien de fois vas-tu dire, « Oui, oui, oui », que tu veux travailler avec le gouvernement, et puis qu'on ne respecte pas nos droits ancestraux, on ne respecte pas les mémorandums et on ne respecte pas les ententes qu'on a faites?

Même communauté : ils ont signé, en 2014, un processus pour adresser l'expansion de la communauté, l'eau potable. Il n'y a rien qui s'est passé. En 2018, on signe une autre entente de protocole. En 2019, la même affaire. On est dans la même situation.

Webequie : 28 ans pour l'eau potable. Ils sont obligés de bouillir leur eau—28 ans. Puis après ça on se demande pourquoi le chef était ici, puis qu'il vienne dire—c'est bien Webequie? Excuse, ce n'est pas Webequie, mais Neskantaga. Je me suis trompé de communauté—Neskantaga, qui nous a dit : « Non, il n'arrivera rien dans ma communauté, sur mon territoire ancestral. » Vingt-huit ans. Puis vous traversez la rivière Attawapiskat? « C'est sur nos territoires ancestraux. Non. »

Bien, non, qu'est-ce que le gouvernement fait? On ne met pas un processus pour aider à la situation. Quelle opportunité manquée. Quelle belle opportunité manquée.

Ça va prendre quoi pour que vous compreniez que les minières vous disent : « Nation à nation, ça prend un consentement des Premières Nations »? Les minières vous le disent. Elles demandent au gouvernement de faire ça. Les Premières Nations vous le disent—bien non. On fait une recommandation pour amender le projet de loi—bien non. « On sait mieux, nous autres, on connaît ça beaucoup mieux que vous autres. » Bien non, vous connaissez ça tellement et vous faites tellement un bon travail que vous avez neuf communautés qui vous amènent en cour. Bravo, chapeau.

Après, on se demande pourquoi ça boîte, pourquoi le développement qui va se faire va coûter plus cher. Tu sais, le temps de dire—s'il faut que je saute sur le bulldozer moi-même pour aller faire le chemin—mais le message est resté pareil; il se prend d'une autre différente manière. C'est dépassé, ce temps-là.

On est dans un temps de réconciliation, on est dans un temps où il faut travailler avec les Premières Nations, reconnaître leurs droits, parce qu'on a signé des traités, on a signé des documents. Vivons avec les documents qu'on

a faits et respectons les Premières Nations, parce que c'est de même qu'on va avancer. C'est de même que le développement économique va se faire, pour les Premières Nations, pour la province et pour les minières. Tout le monde est gagnant là-dedans.

Bien non : on a un gouvernement qui sait mieux, qui sait beaucoup mieux, puis c'est de même que vous allez faillir à ce que vous voulez accomplir. Pourtant, si vous aviez accepté certaines propositions qu'on vous a proposées—mais vous avez dit non. Merci, madame la Présidente.

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): On va passer aux questions. Questions?

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: Merci, madame la Présidente. Alors, en laissant la loi telle qu'elle est, on continuera à imposer un fardeau réglementaire inutile aux entreprises, ce qui les poussera à quitter l'Ontario et à s'installer dans les juridictions de nos concurrents.

L'opposition pourrait-elle expliquer pourquoi elle ne ressent pas l'urgence de sécuriser la chaîne d'approvisionnement et souhaite continuer à soumettre le secteur à des règles obsolètes au lieu de les mettre à jour pour qu'elles correspondent à la réalité de l'industrie telle qu'elle est aujourd'hui?

Le député trouve-t-il acceptable qu'il faille jusqu'à 15 ans pour ouvrir une mine en Ontario?

1550

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci à la députée de Mississauga-Centre—c'est ça, hein?—puis merci pour la question en français.

Ce que je ne trouve pas acceptable ou que je n'aurais pas de misère à expliquer, c'est quand les minières vous demandent la même chose que les Premières Nations puis que votre gouvernement trouve que ce n'est pas acceptable. Elles vous ont demandé un processus. Les Premières Nations ont dit : « Sans consentement, ça ne bougera pas. » Pourtant, on a eu l'opportunité. On vous a fait une recommandation durant le comité; vous avez dit non.

Avez-vous peut-être pensé que si on avait instauré ça, peut-être que le processus aurait avancé beaucoup plus vite? Peut-être que si on avait été proactifs—s'il y a de quoi que j'ai appris en négociations, c'est que tu mets le processus clair, tu mets un processus qui est équitable pour les deux parties; dans ce cas-là c'était l'employeur puis le syndicat. Mais pourquoi ne pas avoir mis la même situation pour une tierce partie? Qu'est-ce que les minières vous demandaient? On a vu les Premières Nations qui sont venues vous mettre une injonction.

Mais on vous a fait des amendements qui auraient aidé à ce processus-là. Vous avez dit non. Puis là, on va payer le prix. C'est la province au complet qui va payer le prix. Pas à cause de nous, mais à cause de vous.

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Merci pour la réponse. Prochaine question? Next question?

M^{me} Sandy Shaw: Premièrement, je voudrais vous remercier pour vos paroles cet après-midi et pour nous aider à comprendre les faits du Nord. Merci pour ça.

Vous avez parlé du manque de respect pour les Premières Nations. Ça commence et ça continue ici dans cet endroit. Nous avons entendu plusieurs fois le gouvernement dire : « Quinze ans, c'est trop long pour ouvrir une mine. » Mais, pour moi, ce que je trouve trop long, ce sont les presque 30 ans que les gens du Nord, des Premières Nations, ont attendu pour de l'eau potable. Est-ce que vous pouvez expliquer pourquoi ça montre encore un grand manque de respect pour les Premières Nations ici en Ontario?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, aussi, pour la question en français. Très bien faite, ta question.

La question se pose, c'est sûr : 28 ans à faire bouillir son eau. Il y a une génération qui n'a jamais bu de l'eau d'un robinet. Ils boivent l'eau dans les bouteilles. Puis après ça on se demande, puis j'en ai parlé un peu—on vous entend dire que 15 ans, c'est trop long. C'est trop long, mais si on travaillait proactivement avec les Premières Nations—puis c'est ça qu'elles demandent, parce qu'elles ont été de bonne foi, les Premières Nations. Elles ont signé un traité, elles ont voulu travailler. Combien de fois est-ce que tu vas dire oui et, qu'après ça, c'est juste sur un bord, ce n'est pas réciproque? Tu signes un mémorandum d'entente; tu t'attends à ce que sur quoi on s'est entendu va se faire.

J'ai parlé d'Attawapiskat. Ils ont signé trois mémorandums d'entente pour agrandir leur communauté. Puis après ça, on est tous surpris que, là, les neuf Premières Nations qui étaient ici pour dire : « Assez, c'est assez. On va vous amener en cour parce que vous ne respectez pas nos territoires, notre consentement puis aussi la transparence. Il faut nous informer. » On est tous surpris, puis après ça on va être surpris de pourquoi ça va retarder—

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Merci. On va passer à la prochaine question. Next question?

M. Anthony Leardi: Merci, madame la Présidente. J'ai devant moi toute une liste de 44 projets de loi qui ont été déposés par les députés du NPD devant cette Chambre, devant cette Assemblée. Le député a dit que la consultation, c'est nécessaire pour passer un projet de loi. Donc j'aimerais poser cette question au député : pour les 44 projets de loi que les députés du NPD ont déposés devant cette Assemblée, quel était le processus de consultation qu'ils ont suivi avec les Premières Nations pour leurs 44 projets de loi?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci encore pour la question en français. Je suis content que le débat se fasse en français. C'est assez intéressant, puis je vois la ministre qui sourit.

Bien, je peux dire que quand ça vient à ce projet de loi-là—parce qu'on débat du projet de loi 71, fait que je vais rester sur ça. Moi, je t'ai dit, je représente, dans ma circonscription—puis si tu regardes mon collègue de Kiiwetinoong, on représente beaucoup de circonscriptions qui vont être affectées. On a entendu trop souvent votre gouvernement dire—on parle de Marten Falls. En passant, Marten Falls est dans ma circonscription; Webequie est dans l'autre, celle de mon collègue de Kiiwetinoong.

Les Premières Nations vous ont demandé dès le début d'avoir une étude environnementale beaucoup plus agrandie. Votre réponse à ça, c'était : « Bien, non, on laisse les Premières Nations prendre le devant de ça. » Mais pourquoi ne pas avoir dit aux autres Premières Nations—parce que je sais que, moi, j'ai parlé à certains chefs du Traité 9. Ils ont dit qu'ils n'ont jamais été consultés—jamais été consultés. Moi, je leur parle; je vais là à tous les quatre mois, si possible, pour aller les rencontrer dans ces communautés-là.

Mais pourquoi est-ce qu'on n'a pas consulté avec le Traité 9? Parce que, il ne faut pas l'oublier, l'eau coule vers le nord. S'il y a un désastre quelque part dans la région—les rivières, on parle d'Attawapiskat, des grosses rivières qui s'en viennent. S'il y a un désastre, où est-ce que tu penses qu'il va aller, le désastre? Il va couler vers en bas, vers la baie James, ce qui va affecter les communautés qui y vivent. Il y a deux de ces communautés-là, en passant, mon cher, qui sont évacuées. Tu as Fort Albany et tu as Kashechewan qui sont rendues éparpillées à la grandeur de la province.

En passant, votre gouvernement a signé, quatre ou cinq ans passés, un document pour déménager la communauté de Kashechewan. Où est-ce qu'ils sont? Le chemin n'est même pas bâti. Mais c'est drôle : on parle du chemin, par exemple, du « Ring of Fire » et de comment ça va aller vite et de comment on dépense de l'argent là-dedans. Puis la communauté est où encore, aujourd'hui, cinq ans passés? Ne crois-tu pas que le chemin aurait dû être développé, au moins quelques kilomètres—

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Merci. On va passer à la prochaine question. Next question?

Miss Monique Taylor: Unfortunately, I'm going to break the trend, my friend. It was going so great with the French, but I'm not capable of doing that.

You definitely talked a lot about environmental protections and effects on First Nations. We know that First Nations have been left behind for decades under several governments: lack of clean drinking water, lack of proper housing, environmental issues. We're seeing this government consistently undermine our environmental statuses, and then we see the travel of this bill take it to two communities that aren't as heavily affected by the mines and no consultation with Indigenous communities.

Can you maybe talk about the fact of why the government would avoid going to communities that would be directly affected by these mines?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Thank you for the question. I'll answer in French since I just want to continue the discussion in French.

Écoute, Timmins, c'est une ville minière, puis Sudbury aussi. Fait que c'était normal qu'ils passent par là pour avoir le consentement. Je ne les blâme pas, mais on aurait dû continuer à voyager le projet de loi, se rendre à Thunder Bay, se rendre dans les régions comme Sioux Lookout ou se rendre, tu sais, là où le monde va être affecté, ce qui aurait donné une chance à ces communautés-là de faire une déposition puis d'adresser leurs « concerns ». Mais

on sait, à 1 000 kilomètres, de Timmins—de chez nous, Thunder Bay, c'est six heures. De Timmins, ça doit être, je dirais, rajoute un autre deux heures—huit heures? Oui, je dirais huit heures. Fait que, pourquoi ne pas s'être rendu là? Ils voyageaient; c'était le temps d'y aller, là où ça aurait donné l'opportunité aux communautés qui vont être les plus affectées. Ils auraient dû. Pourquoi? Pour donner l'opportunité, parce que, là, on va être dans une situation qui peut-être va nuire à toute la province, puis c'est dommage parce qu'on a eu l'opportunité de faire les bonnes choses.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to further debate.

Mr. John Fraser: I'm pleased to be able to stand today and speak to third reading of Bill 71 and the Mining Act. I just want to start by saying that I supported this act at second reading because I do think it's critical that we extract our resources from the north for the prosperity of the north, and the prosperity of all in the north. Subsequent to voting in favour at the second reading, after the bill went through committee and through various things that have happened here, it's very clear that the duty to consult was not met. The challenge with that is you can't simply expropriate a piece of people's land. It's not that simple.

1600

The process of consultation is not easy. We set up a process that was longer and more deliberative and included everyone and that was maybe not as fast as everybody would like. The challenge becomes that when you exclude some people, when you say to some people, "Your opinion, your voice, what you have to say doesn't matter; it doesn't matter, and we're not going to listen to you," what does that do? First of all, probably about the worst thing you can do to an individual or a group of people is to say, "What you have to say?" or literally, "You don't matter. You're extinct. You're not in the picture."

How do you think people are going to react? What are they going to do? First of all, it's not right. Second of all, they're going to go to court. And this government's record in court cases is not really that great. It's 0 for something, but I don't know if it's 10 or 12 by now.

Interjections.

Mr. John Fraser: Well, maybe it's not 0. I think you may have won one, but I'm not sure.

In all seriousness, here's the problem with the court challenges. It's not about winning or losing; it's actually about what happens to the project you're trying to do when you go to court and you're not successful. That slows down even further your ability to get the project done.

So I'm kind of torn. There are good things in this bill that talk about development and the extraction of resources in the north for prosperity for all, but the duty to consult is not met. It's a very clear duty, and it's different from—like I say, it's not like you're trying to build an expressway somewhere and you're going to expropriate somebody's land. There's a process by which we do that here in Ontario. There's a totally different process and it has to do with the duty to consult. It's nation to nation.

It makes it very hard to support a bill that has very supportable things in it. That's the problem when you exclude people, when you say to a group of people or groups of people, "What's happening on your land or around you doesn't matter. We don't need to listen to you. We don't need to talk to you." You're picking winners and losers.

The end result of this is we're not moving forward in the spirit of truth and reconciliation and what our duties are as a government. That's not right. It also puts the projects that we want to move forward with at risk because of the legal jeopardy.

I think that that duty to consult gets confused with what we call consultations here in committee, which is, we can call them up in a couple of days and we sit down and listen to people, and then what we see happens—and it's not just with this government; it's with other governments that I've seen before and other governments in other provinces—is people come and say what they have to say, and we totally ignore them.

It's different. It's nation to nation. It's about our relationship with the people who were here before us. It's not easy, and sometimes it takes way longer than we all want it to. But if we don't do it, we put the things that we're trying to do together to make the north more prosperous—everyone in the north more prosperous—at risk.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to questions for the member.

Mr. Will Bouma: I really appreciated the speech from the member from Ottawa South. It's really good to hear a member who was here when the Liberals were in power talking about a duty to consult, because as a lot of people here will remember, when there were wind turbines going up all over the province of Ontario, I believe that that government actually made it illegal for municipalities to be consulted on this and purposefully left that out of that part of the—and other members can speak to that much more here. I was going to ask the member if he regrets, then—since he's pontificating in the House today about a duty to consult—the actions of his government when they completely cut out massive chunks of rural Ontario from consultations on wind turbines.

Mr. John Fraser: Herein lies the problem: We are actually working nation to nation. That's what we're talking about here. It's a different relationship than we have with each other in cities, in rural Ontario. I think the member knows that. That's what the problem is here: Somehow we think this is the same as the things that we do in the cities and urban areas and what we do in committee. It's totally different. It's a process, it takes a long time, but it's respectful and responsible, and it's especially important because of the kind of things that we saw in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that need to be respected.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: We were in the Legislature here when First Nations chiefs came to the Legislative

Assembly and they vocalized their disgust, really, around the fact that there wasn't informed consent on this bill. It's one of the things I think that the government isn't listening to. The member talked at length about informed consent. It's just another indicative factor that this government just wants to rush through things without consulting people who are directly affected by these changes, by this legislation.

I know the member talked about it, but has he heard directly from First Nation chiefs during the public hearings as to how this would affect this legislation going forward and the mining industry?

Mr. John Fraser: I wasn't at the consultations but my colleague from Kingston was there, and what he heard very clearly and almost universally from First Nations was, "You didn't do the thing you were supposed to do. You didn't consult."

I'm going to repeat this again: The process of consultation is different than the thing we do when we're going to put a new park in, or Ontario Place—oh, wait, no; there was no consultation on Ontario Place, sorry.

The reality is, it's established through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission—which we've committed to—the process by which there is a duty to consult and the nature of those consultations. They take longer. They're harder. That's just the way it is, folks. If we want to build together, we have to respect that process.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): One last question.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Quickly, I have before me the official Liberal Party position from 2014. According to this news report:

"Ontario's Liberal Party has recommitted to spending \$1 billion to build a highway to the province's remote, northern Ring of Fire region, regardless of federal" involvement.

"We are making it a priority for my government," said leader Kathleen Wynne "to cheers from the local crowd. 'We will commit \$1 billion with or without the federal government involvement.'"

My question to the member is this: Why has the Liberal Party totally flip-flopped on this issue and is now utterly abandoning any effort whatsoever to get to the Ring of Fire, notwithstanding the fact that they made that \$1-billion promise and then reneged on it?

Mr. John Fraser: Herein lies the problem: You google it and you get a news release and you don't actually understand that the process of consultation that we undertook was wider than what this government has done. As a matter of fact, when this government came in, it trashed all that consultative process. You ended it, like you did with a whole bunch of other things. You just said, "Nah, we're not going to do that," instead of actually taking that process and building on it, instead of actually taking a process that was working, albeit slowly and was difficult and hard, but it included everybody. But this government said, "You're a winner; you're a loser. You're a winner, you're a loser."

Thank you for the question. You might want to take a look at the history of the file.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to further debate.

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: Alors on va continuer en français cet après-midi pour garder nos traducteurs sur leurs gardes. Merci pour votre très bon travail.

Madame la Présidente, je prends la parole aujourd'hui pour appuyer le projet de loi 71, la Loi visant l'aménagement de davantage de mines.

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Cette loi a le potentiel de créer de nouveaux emplois, de stimuler la croissance économique et d'améliorer la vie des Ontariennes et des Ontariens.

Comme nous le savons tous, l'Ontario abrite certains des minéraux les plus convoités au monde. Notre province a une longue et fière histoire minière et abrite les plus grands gisements de minéraux au monde, tels que le nickel, le cobalt et le lithium.

L'industrie minière joue un rôle majeur dans l'économie de l'Ontario, en fournissant des milliers d'emplois et en contribuant chaque année à notre PIB à hauteur de plusieurs milliards de dollars.

Pendant, nous ne devons pas considérer cette industrie comme acquise. Nous devons continuer à soutenir ce secteur précieux et à assurer sa croissance et sa prospérité. C'est pourquoi, en mars de cette année, notre gouvernement a lancé notre stratégie pour les minéraux essentiels, qui établit notre feuille de route quinquennale visant à consolider la position de l'Ontario en tant que leader mondial de l'approvisionnement en minéraux essentiels, en investissant dans la poursuite de l'exploration et de l'innovation et en réduisant les formalités administratives afin que les entreprises puissent construire davantage de mines.

La loi visant à accroître le nombre de mines perpétuera la précieuse tradition minière de l'Ontario en renforçant notre position de leader mondial dans le domaine de l'exploitation minière. Elle contribuera à attirer davantage d'investissements et à soutenir notre économie « made in Ontario » en fournissant des minéraux essentiels pour des technologies telles que les smartphones, les véhicules électriques, les batteries et les produits pharmaceutiques.

N'oublions pas qu'en décembre de l'année dernière, notre province était fière d'inaugurer CAMI Assembly, la première usine de fabrication entièrement électrique de notre pays, exploitée par General Motors Canada.

Il n'est pas possible de soutenir notre industrie de véhicules électriques en pleine croissance sans soutenir notre chaîne d'approvisionnement en minerais.

Alors que l'Ontario réalise des investissements ambitieux dans son secteur automobile, ces changements profiteraient à l'ensemble du secteur des minéraux et feraient progresser le plan de notre province visant à construire une chaîne d'approvisionnement plus intégrée, en reliant les producteurs de minéraux du Nord au secteur manufacturier du Sud.

Grâce au projet de loi 71, notre gouvernement contribue à faciliter le développement de nouvelles mines en Ontario. Il rationalisera le processus d'octroi des permis

d'exploitation minière, réduira les formalités administratives inutiles et donnera aux compagnies minières une plus grande marge de manoeuvre pour se lancer dans de nouveaux projets.

Les retards dans les projets et les dépassements de coûts sont dus à des formalités administratives redondantes imposées à l'industrie minière, qui peuvent toutes être évitées. Les modifications que nous apportons à la Loi sur les mines amélioreront la compétitivité de l'Ontario et attireront les investissements dans notre province.

Notre projet de loi créera davantage d'emplois bien rémunérés pour les Ontariens et les Ontariennes en permettant aux sociétés minières d'obtenir plus facilement les permis nécessaires à la construction de nouvelles mines.

Nous voulons que les sociétés minières se concentrent sur la création d'emplois et l'exploitation de projets sûrs et durables. Plutôt que d'être submergé par une bureaucratie écrasante, le projet de loi 71 accélérera le délai d'approbation d'un permis d'exploitation minière.

La procédure d'autorisation actuelle est complexe, longue et coûteuse, ce qui entraîne souvent des retards dans les projets, une augmentation des coûts et la perte d'opportunités de développement minier. Ce projet de loi rendra la demande de permis plus efficace, réduisant le fardeau des organismes de réglementation gouvernementaux, tout en garantissant que les projets miniers sont menés à bien en temps voulu et dans le respect du budget.

Ces modifications de la loi sur l'exploitation minière constitueraient un atout majeur pour le nord de l'Ontario en offrant une plus grande certitude pour la planification des activités et la génération d'investissements. De plus, ces développements créeraient des opportunités économiques positives pour nos communautés nordiques et indigènes.

Avec le projet de loi 71, en harmonie avec la stratégie des minéraux essentiels de notre gouvernement, nous nous engageons avec l'industrie, les communautés et les organisations autochtones sur les amendements proposés à la Loi sur les mines. Nous nous engageons à respecter notre obligation de consulter, en collaborant avec les communautés et les organismes autochtones, sur tous les changements législatifs et réglementaires actuels et futurs dans le respect des droits ancestraux et des droits issus de traités.

En outre, la modernisation de la Loi sur les mines soutiendra la transition de l'Ontario vers une économie verte. Nous créerons les conditions permettant à l'industrie minière de construire des mines plus efficacement, tout en maintenant nos protections environnementales de classe mondiale.

L'objectif de notre gouvernement et de renforcer les chaînes d'approvisionnement qui répondent aux intérêts mondiaux tout en soutenant l'économie verte émergente.

En conclusion, j'invite mes collègues de cette Assemblée à soutenir la loi pour construire plus de mines. Ce projet de loi constitue une étape essentielle pour l'économie et la prospérité générale de notre province en tirant parti des précieuses ressources dont nous disposons.

And to conclude, Madam Speaker, I will say a few words in English.

Furthermore, modernizing the Mining Act will support Ontario's transition to a green economy—yes, a green economy. We are creating conditions for the mining industry to build mines more efficiently while maintaining our world-class environmental protections. Our government's goal is to strengthen supply chains that meet global interests while supporting the emerging green economy.

I urge all my colleagues in this House to support the Building More Mines Act. This bill is a critical step forward for our province's economy and overall prosperity, taking advantage of our valuable resources and land.

With that, I move that the question be now put.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Madame Kusendova has moved that the question be now put. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow this question to be put to the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion that the question be now put, please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion that the question be now put, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred to the next instance of deferred votes.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Orders of the day?

Mr. Ross Romano: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member for Sault Ste. Marie on a point of order.

Mr. Ross Romano: Speaker, if you seek it, you will see unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Do we have unanimous consent to see the clock at 6? Agreed? Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

GARRETT'S LEGACY ACT (REQUIREMENTS FOR MOVABLE SOCCER GOALS), 2023

LOI DE 2023 SUR LE LEGS DE GARRETT (EXIGENCES RELATIVES AUX BUTS DE SOCCER MOBILES)

Mr. Bresee moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill 99, An Act to provide for safety measures respecting movable soccer goals / Projet de loi 99, Loi prévoyant des mesures de sécurité pour les buts de soccer mobiles.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Pursuant to standing order 100, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Ric Bresee: I'm proud today to rise representing the wonderful people of the riding of Hastings—Lennox

and Addington, and even more proud to bring to this House Bill 99, An Act to provide for safety measures respecting movable soccer goals.

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Speaker, this Bill 99 provides the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport with the mandate to create regulations to establish requirements for organizations and entities respecting the safe use of movable soccer goals that they make available for use by members of the public. The act provides for inspections and requires the minister to establish a mechanism to report complaints of alleged non-compliance with the act.

It may come as a surprise to many in this House that movable soccer nets tipping over have been blamed for more than 40 fatalities across North America—mostly children. I think we can all agree that if there were 40 fatalities, then there are many, many more significant injuries, incidents causing injury—possibly life-changing injury—and, on top of that, a very, very large number of near misses.

Mobile soccer nets are not inherently bad. Soccer is a wonderful sport—and, I'm told, one of the fastest-growing sports in North America—and we don't want to stop the players from using these nets or even stop the players from jumping up to grab the bars. A very passionate and self-declared soccer mom, who is also a member of this House that I'm privileged to know and work with, emphasized to me the importance of stretching to reach the bars in all directions for the goalkeepers. It's part of the practice, the routine of the elite goalkeepers to build that mental understanding of the location of the bars. Personally, I was never a soccer player, and my kids were definitely not elite soccer players, but I do equate it to something that I've seen in many other sports. Specifically, I think of NHL goalies who slap the bars of the net with a stick in the pre-game warm-up. It builds on their spatial awareness. So no, Speaker, we're not trying to curtail or limit the players in their use of these nets.

Nor, Speaker, are we wanting to limit the use of the nets as opposed to other types of nets. There are lots of soccer fields with permanently mounted soccer goals, and those will never tip over. But those fields are also completely dedicated to use as a soccer field. For most facilities, it is much more practical to allow that many different sports are played on the same field, and having nets that can be moved in or out as needed creates that flexibility. It effectively doubles or triples the value of the asset to the school or the municipality or even the private facility owners. It enhances that organization's ability to provide for outdoor recreation that we all want our children, and even our adults, to have access to.

So no, we want to continue to allow these uses by the property owners and by the players, the kids, but we all want them to be safe while they use them. So we make regulations about how they're installed. So this bill, if passed, recognizes that the nature of these movable soccer nets and the fields that they're used on may have many variations. By example, some nets are used on artificial surfaces and, if they're designed so, can be anchored with

the appropriate attachments. Mobile soccer nets used on natural surfaces can sometimes be anchored with pegs or with weights to hold them down. There are a wide variety of nets being used of different materials and for different purposes. So this bill recognizes that, and if it receives royal assent, it will provide the authority for the minister to draft regulations that address the different situations and provide for the enforcement and the penalties for failing to comply.

It even addresses the opportunity to provide signage, stickers, and other educational tools to inform people—especially inform the parents—about these risks. Prior to the incident that I'm about to tell you about, I never knew that mobile soccer nets presented a risk, and I'm willing to bet that, like me, many parents have seen their kids play on or near soccer nets without ever stopping to think that they could tip over. So Speaker, this is a flexible response to reduce the risks of these nets, and I know that preventing these incidents, saving lives and preventing injuries is a priority for all members of the House.

The creation of these regulations will actually not be difficult. There are examples all around us. Several jurisdictions, including the Yukon, Illinois, New York, Arkansas, Wisconsin, have already passed laws requiring the nets to be secure, and almost all soccer associations in Canada and across the world have guidelines on how to do this.

I've spoken with the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport extensively on this, and he wants to make sure that there is a strong education and signage mandate within the regulations. He wants to work with the manufacturers, to make sure that the nets are as safe as they can be. So if there's one single step that members of provincial Parliament can take to save a child, then surely we have an obligation to do so.

Garrett's Legacy Act does not advocate for more red tape on soccer. It doesn't want to drive up the cost of soccer—it is a very affordable sport to play—but, rather, the act proactively mitigates possible death or injuries.

Madam Speaker, unfortunately I must tell the story that brought me to this bill. It starts about six years ago, within my riding, in the town of Greater Napanee. In fact, three days from now, May 12, will be the sixth anniversary of this tragic story. It was a sunny spring day in May 2017. A 15-year-old boy from Napanee named Garrett Mills was playing in a park with his girlfriend, Joanna, and his best friend, Josh. Garrett was a friendly, positive young man who enjoyed making other people laugh, especially through silly puns, apparently. I'm told he made people better just by being around them.

His parents, Dave and Gwen Mills, are very proud of this responsible and charming young man. With modern technology and cell phones, I've actually seen some of the pictures they took that day and that show a young man exactly as he should be: enjoying a beautiful spring day. Later on, his girlfriend told us that Garrett actually said it was one of the best days of his life.

Unfortunately, on that May afternoon, Garrett was goofing around with his friends in a park he'd been to his

entire life, and he was hanging off the crossbar of a movable soccer net, doing chin-ups, when tragedy struck. That 200-pound soccer goal collapsed, falling over on top of him, fracturing his skull. Garrett passed away later that afternoon, a victim of an entirely preventable accident.

I didn't know Garrett personally, but a few months later, I got to know his dad. Dave Mills reached out to me, as I was a grieving father grieving the loss of my own daughter from leukemia. Dave and Gwen Mills are wonderful parents and compassionate human beings. Dave knew what I was going through—no parent should ever have to bury their child. His kind, sympathetic and empathetic words to me at the time were of tremendous comfort to me, and I will always be grateful to him for that.

Part of the stories that Dave told me about his son—he looked up to his son and admired the 15-year-old's outlook on life. Garrett's motto was to get out there and make a change in the world for the better, something we should all aspire to. Apparently, in the weeks shortly before the accident, Garrett, in his perennially curious nature, asked Dave what was meant by the term "legacy." Dave explained that it meant a recognition of what that person did in their lifetime, a recognition that would carry on beyond their own lifetime. Some people write books or music, create art, some will build buildings, some will have statues memorializing their achievements and some have things named after them.

For many of us, our greatest legacy we will ever leave is that of our own children, and the carrying-on of the memory in the parents and the grandparents. It is said that regardless of the length of a person's life, they do continue to live on as long as someone remembers them. At that time, Garrett had said that he hoped to leave a legacy. I know that Garrett will continue to live on in the hearts of his family, but I hope with this bill to take that one step further.

So, Madam Speaker, we have before us Garrett's Legacy Act, because a preventable tragedy can no longer be called an accident. Dave and Gwen will continue to remember Garrett, no matter what—is laughter, his love of life. Dave, Garrett's father, knows he can't get Garrett back, but he also doesn't want his son's death to have been in vain.

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So please, let's carry this bill today and move it forward to committee and third reading so that no other parent has to bury a child because of an incident like this, because of a preventable incident like this. And then Garrett will have his legacy, and Dave and Gwen Mills will know that their son helped to prevent others from suffering the way they have.

I implore you, the elected representatives of the people of Ontario, please act to enshrine Garrett's name in this Bill 99, the Garrett's Legacy Act, so that his legacy is the prevention of another family suffering this kind of terrible loss.

I know that any member here, if you could prevent the loss of a young person or prevent a parent from having to bury their child, they would do it. This bill will do just that. I ask that you all support this.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Further debate?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I rise today to speak on the matter of a private member's bill concerning Garrett's Legacy Act (Requirements for Movable Soccer Goals). This is a bill which I believe offers a reasonable and considered approach to an issue of significant importance.

The bill was introduced and named after a Napanee youngster, Garrett Mills, who died in a tragic mishap in the spring of 2017. While the bill has been presented in the House multiple times, it has not received royal assent, and I am happy to facilitate this conversation further into committee and the government. David Mills, Garrett's father, knows nothing can bring his son back. However, he has said that getting the bill reintroduced and eventually passed will certainly help.

As a parent and as a grandmother, my heart and my condolences go to the Mills family. What happened six years ago was heart-wrenching, and together with the entire NDP caucus, we are keeping your family in our minds and in our hearts and in our prayers. We are sending you our love, and we hope that this tragedy never, ever occurs to another child in Ontario again.

Drawing from the rich history of dialogue in this chamber, I'm reminded of the words of Nelson Mandela, who once said, "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." This sentiment is as relevant now as it was then, especially when we consider the safety of our children, the future of our province. This powerfully underscores the moral and societal obligation we have as adults to ensure the safety and well-being of our children at home, at school, within the community and especially in sports.

Garrett's Legacy Act is a bill that is a response to a tragedy, a tragic accident that took the life of a young boy and a young child named Garrett Mills. His legacy, however, is one that can provide safety and assurance for all children who participate in the beloved sport of soccer across Ontario.

As we debate this bill, let us remember that at the heart of this legislative endeavour is the memory of a child whose life was cut far too short and the family who had the courage to turn their grief into advocacy. The bill's main provision, which is to establish safety standards for movable soccer goals, is a reasonable step towards the goal of child safety. This is not an overly restrictive measure, nor does it impose burdensome regulations on sporting organizations. Rather, it asks us to take reasonable precautions to prevent avoidable accidents from happening again.

There are those who may argue that the measures proposed in this bill could prevent challenges to small sporting organizations. This is a fair concern, but cost does not always have to lead to a stalled process. While responsibility and accountability are the cornerstones of good governance, this bill encourages responsibility not just at the governmental level but also within our community organizations. It asks everyone to play their part in safeguarding our children.

It is vital—I cannot overstate this piece—to make sure that the government will be required to do their proper due diligence with the amateur and sporting non-profits across the province that maintain these facilities to ensure there's no undue cost. While I recognize that the member opposite who is proposing this legislation cannot include funding in this type of legislation, I will publicly muse that it might be reasonable that the ministry commit to community consultation and consider a type of reserve or additional measures funding to offset any costs so that organizations or parks and recreation departments through municipalities can meet any new protocols.

Rules are only as strong as they are used and enforced, and if this chamber and ultimately the House moves forward to codify this bill into law, then we should be mindful of ensuring that, down the road, the ministry evaluates resources to ensure compliance and that the ministry checks in with our sports stakeholders across the province, the actors who are doing the work—who are often volunteers—of youth sports.

The importance of children and youth sports in Ontario cannot be overstated. Participating in sports provides a multitude of benefits, from fostering a healthy lifestyle and promoting physical development to teaching invaluable life skills such as teamwork, discipline and resilience. Sports serve as a platform for children and youth to learn about co-operation, leadership and the importance of setting and achieving goals.

Yet beyond the personal growth opportunity, youth sports play a crucial role in community building. They create bonds among children, families and community members, fostering a sense of unity and belonging. Youth sports is where my family grew many of our friendships, ones that last to this day. They provide a safe and constructive environment for children to engage with their peers, thereby promoting social inclusion and diversity.

Support for youth sports is not merely an investment in our children, but in the future of our society. It ensures that these beneficial experiences remain accessible to all, regardless of socio-economic status or geographic location. In doing so, we are fostering a healthier, more connected and more resilient future for generations to come. Therefore, it is our collective responsibility as parents, educators, community leaders and policy-makers to continue to champion and invest in youth sports in Canada. Our children deserve nothing less.

I am a former coach of youth sports. It is paramount that we do everything and anything possible to keep children safe when they are playing sports in the province of Ontario. This brings me to St. Catharines, a community that I'm kind of passionate about, and passionate about its youth sports—home to countless soccer fields, and as our Scottish community calls them, often a football field, where thousands of children play, grow and foster a love for the game. Sports are to be enjoyed.

We have great sporting leagues in my riding. The St. Catharines Jets Soccer Club, Garden City soccer club, the St. Catharines Minor Baseball Association, the St. Catharines Kiwanis aquatics club, St. Catharines Rowing Club, St. Catharines Falcons hockey, St. Catharines Junior

Badgers. I'd best there stop there or I'll take up all the time that is going to be remaining. The point is that, despite the rain, the heat or the early mornings, parents and their children show up every day eager to play and to improve. We owe it to them to make sure we do all we can to keep each and every child safe within all of our communities in Ontario.

These are examples of the vibrant youth sporting cultures we have in St. Catharines and, indeed, across Ontario. This culture, this spirit of sport, is something we want to encourage, support and, most importantly, safeguard. Through reasonable measures such as the ones proposed in Garrett's Legacy Act, we can do just that.

1640

In the face of potential challenges, let us also remember the creativity, the resilience and the commitment of the people of Ontario. We have seen it time and time again, how our communities rise to the challenge, and I am confident that they will rise to this one as well. Garrett's Legacy Act is a reasonable, balanced approach to a critical issue. It seeks to protect our children, to ensure the joy of the sport is not marred by preventable tragedies. It invites us—as lawmakers, as community members and as Ontarians—to uphold our responsibility to our youngest citizens.

It is my hope that the ministry will follow up with consultation with the community, the volunteer and amateur sporting organizations to ensure that any measures enacted today will be met with the equally weighted support of our Ontario government to ensure costs are offset and goals can be reached.

I will be supporting this bill with the understanding that it is not just about movable soccer goalposts, but about the legacy we leave behind for our children, about the safe and vibrant sporting culture we want for them. Let us all in this House across Ontario please remember Garrett. Let us honour his family's advocacy. Let us forever keep Garrett in our hearts and minds, across every soccer field, across every sporting event. Most of all, let his legacy be one of safety, care and love for the sport he played.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Further debate?

Hon. Todd Smith: It is an honour and a pleasure to speak during private members' business here this afternoon. I want to thank the member from St. Catharines for her remarks this afternoon on a very, very important piece of legislation brought forward by my friend and colleague from Hastings–Lennox and Addington, a neighbouring riding, Bill 99, Garrett's Legacy Act. And it's great to welcome his wife Heidi to the Legislature here today as well. I see Heidi quite often at events, along with the member from Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Garrett's Legacy Act, An Act to provide for safety measures respecting movable soccer goals, is what we're talking about here today—something that hits close to home for me, actually. It was back in November 2017 when I brought the Mills family here to Queen's Park for first reading of Garrett's Legacy Act as a member of the official opposition. It was a few months before that, as Mr. Bresee highlighted, in May of that year—we're coming up

on the sixth anniversary of this terrible tragedy in Napanee—where Garrett Mills lost his life. The member described it so well: A 15-year-old boy who's out in the park with his girlfriend and his best friend just hanging around, being kids, having a great time—being silly, as his dad Dave described him. I call Dave “Buzz,” Madam Speaker—Buzz is his nickname and his radio persona that he goes by. He's a morning radio announcer at Rock 107 in the Quinte region. I've known Dave, or Buzz, for quite some time, and of course, have gotten to know Gwen over the last six years since this tragedy occurred.

But they were there in the park on a beautiful sunny day in Napanee, just hanging out. Garrett wasn't a soccer player; he was just a kid hanging out in the park, having a good time with his friends. His dad told me that he had just taken up physical fitness. He was starting to get in shape. He was a bit of a beanpole, Madam Speaker. He wasn't a big kid at all, but he jumped up to grab the crossbar of this 400-pound movable soccer goal to do a couple of chin-ups when it came crashing down and crushed his skull.

I remember when the news broke that day in the Quinte region. Buzz is a bit of a celebrity in our community, and there was a lot of grief in our community that day and for the days to come—just such a preventable tragedy in our community. So it was my honour to bring that private member's bill to the floor of the Legislature for first reading in November 2017 and then debate it in December 2017 and get full support from the Legislature, which I anticipate we'll get here today, for something that is as common sense as this is. I never want to predict the outcome of the Legislature, but I'm pretty sure we're all on the same page here today around this.

Garrett lost his life that day, but as MPP Bresee mentioned, there have been over 40 young people across North America that have been killed by these tipping soccer goals. Some of them are 400 pounds, but if you push on them with your fingers in the right direction, if they're not secured, they can fall over and kill a child or seriously harm a child. A gust of wind sometimes, if they're not secured, can knock these nets over.

I remember at the time reaching out to a number of stakeholders, interested parties and groups to discuss whether or not this made sense to them and maybe look at red tape issues that might occur as a result of bringing in legislation like this. What would it mean? We had so much support at that time.

I jotted them down, because I remember a few of the stakeholder groups that I met with: the Insurance Bureau of Canada, the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, Parachute, the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association, Parks and Recreation Ontario and the Ontario Safety League. That was the year, Madam Speaker—I don't know if you'll remember—that TFC, the Toronto Football Club, won Major League Soccer that year, and they were supporting Garrett's Legacy Act at that time. There was a lot of support to do this, to make this common-sense piece of legislation become reality and allow Garrett's legacy to live on through this common-sense piece of legislation.

As the member from St. Catharines described, there are a lot of kids out there playing soccer and playing sports in

our communities. It just makes so much sense for the personal development for these children. They call soccer the beautiful game. I think many of us would agree that teaching our children the value of hard work and discipline and teamwork really is a beautiful thing.

We're not always able to protect our kids. Kids are going to get injured. They are going to get seriously hurt playing sports. But sometimes there are common-sense approaches that are completely preventable. These injuries are completely preventable, and these deaths are preventable. This is one of those ways. It's up to us as elected officials to make sure that we're passing legislation that is going to make this different.

I can tell you, I was shocked when this happened, and then I was shocked to learn that this had been going on and that 40 children had lost their lives and many others were seriously injured across North America. There have been jurisdictions, as MPP Bresee outlined, that have already passed legislation, including the Yukon, and many US states have brought in legislation to ensure that these goals are secure, that they have the weights on them, that they are attached so they won't tip over. And they're not restrictive. They're not resulting in red tape.

It really hit home that a 15-year-old young girl by the name of Jaime Palm from Bradford died the same way; that a six-year-old from Wallaceburg, down in southwestern Ontario, who was actually playing soccer during a game—Mark Weese lost his life. Can you imagine what a terrible situation that must have been for everybody at the field that day? What a tragic event that was so preventable.

I had the opportunity in the spring of 2018—the Premier wasn't the Premier then. The Premier was the candidate, and he was making his way across the province, meeting people in communities all across Ontario, including in the Quinte region. I brought him into my old haunts, Quinte Broadcasting, to meet the folks there and make an appearance on the Lorne Brooker Show and talk about some of the things that were important to him and hear from people on the radio. He met Buzz that day in the Rock 107 studio. He sat down and heard the story about Garrett and what had happened to him. I remember, as Buzz was telling the Premier about the tragic situation and how awful it was for his family and the entire community, the Premier's eyes welled up. He had tears in his eyes and he said, “Don't worry, buddy. We're going to get this done for you, and we're going to get this done for Garrett.”

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Today, we have the opportunity to stand together, join together as members of the Legislature to ensure that this is Garrett's legacy. It's a positive, positive legacy, one that is going to save lives and prevent injuries down the road. Full marks to my colleague the member from Hastings—Lennox and Addington for bringing it forward today. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Further debate?

Mr. Will Bouma: It gives me great pleasure to speak to Bill 99, An Act to provide for safety measures respecting movable soccer goals, or Garrett's Legacy Act, this afternoon. I, too, am carrying the ball as the member

from Hastings–Lennox and Addington is carrying the ball that was first fielded in this place by the member from the Bay of Quinte, the current Minister of Energy, who can't bring forth private members' bills.

I don't know if I have a whole lot to add, but I love being here in this place during private members' business because it's where we get to bare our souls on the things that matter so much to us and so deeply to us.

It wasn't too long ago—I have to thank the member from Burlington, who was taken away from this place by other—I can't refer to her absence; I apologize. But she couldn't speak to it this afternoon, so I'm here filling in her place and carrying the ball a little bit further.

It seemed only just a couple of weeks ago where her big personal piece was the death of her child, and for her to be able to make a mental health announcement about mental health in schools—it's deeply personal, and that was a member's motion that I think she brought forward a few months ago, and to be able to congratulate her on that work and to see that come to fruition. Those opportunities in private members' business when we get to bring those things that are really close to our hearts here are just absolutely amazing.

The word “legacy” is such a powerful word, and it's something that's passed along. My office is down the hall at the end of the northeast corner on the second floor, and I walk past the pictures of all the people who sat here before us—we're in a very exclusive club—and I wonder sometimes, what is the legacy that they left?

We have these opportunities—I see the member from Sarnia–Lambton, who has probably passed more private members' bills than anyone else who's sitting in this place right now, and the passion he brings for those things, and I just so appreciate that. This is an opportunity to do such a good thing. I remember the current Minister of Colleges and Universities talking about the death of her sister because of a school bus accident when the member from Kitchener–Conestoga brought forth a simple change to school buses that would make them much more safe.

These are the things we get to do here, colleagues. We get to play politics and we get to yell at each other and heckle a little bit and do all of those things, but once in a while, and especially during private members' business, we get to do some stuff that is very, very good, and this is one of these things that is very, very good. So I would encourage all members—now that we have the opportunity, let's make a lasting legacy for Garrett Mills. Let's pass this piece of legislation this afternoon and let's see if we can do everything we can to see this come forward for third reading and passed again and make it the law.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Further debate? Further debate?

The member has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Ric Bresee: I want to thank all of my colleagues here for expressing their interest and their support for this bill and for those who have spoken to it. I also wanted to mention the members, both past and present, who have brought bills like this forward to continue to move this forward so that we can get this done.

I think we can all agree that the safety of the athletes, the public and especially the children is a cause that we can all stand behind. What this bill will do, if the House sees fit to pass it, is not only give Garrett Mills a legacy but also save lives.

It is a privilege to stand here before this House to promote the game of soccer, but to increase the safety of the beautiful game. I would also like to thank the wide number of soccer associations across the province and across the country who organize the sport. They're the ones who make it safe for our kids, and we are now, with this bill, going to equip them with another tool to make the sport safer, while keeping the players on the field and the public safe.

This bill today will hopefully see through education, signage and securing the nets, so that there are no more preventable accidents involving movable soccer nets.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

MPP Bresee has moved second reading of Bill 99, An Act to provide for safety measures respecting movable soccer goals. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Pursuant to standing order 108, the bill is referred to the Committee of the Whole House, unless—

Mr. Ric Bresee: If it pleases the Speaker, I'd like to refer it to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Is the majority in favour of the bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy? Agreed. The bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

We now move on to the late show.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): All right. There being no further business, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, May 10, at 9 o'clock.

The House adjourned at 1657.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott

Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Valerie Quioc Lim, Wai Lam (William) Wong,

Meghan Stenson, Christopher Tyrell

Temporary Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes par intérim: Mike Civil

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barnes, Patrice (PC)	Ajax	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough- Sud-Ouest	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Bresee, Ric (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Byers, Rick (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough- Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Associate Minister of Transportation / Ministre associé des Transports
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Flack, Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Holland, Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jama, Sarah (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Jones, Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Ke, Vincent (IND)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Mantha, Michael (IND)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
McCarthy, Todd J. (PC)	Durham	
McGregor, Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines
Quinn, Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
Rae, Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-présidente et présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associée du Logement
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Vacant	Kanata—Carleton	